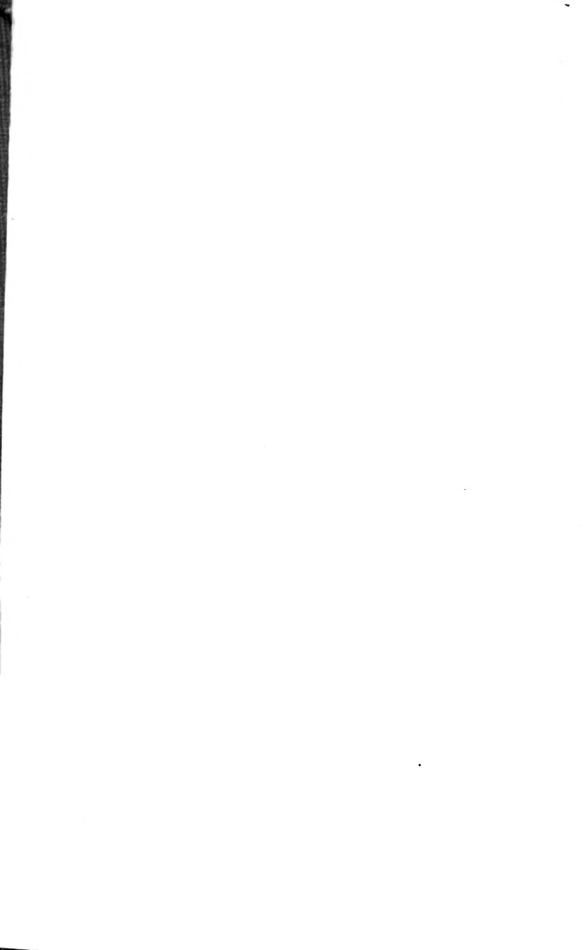




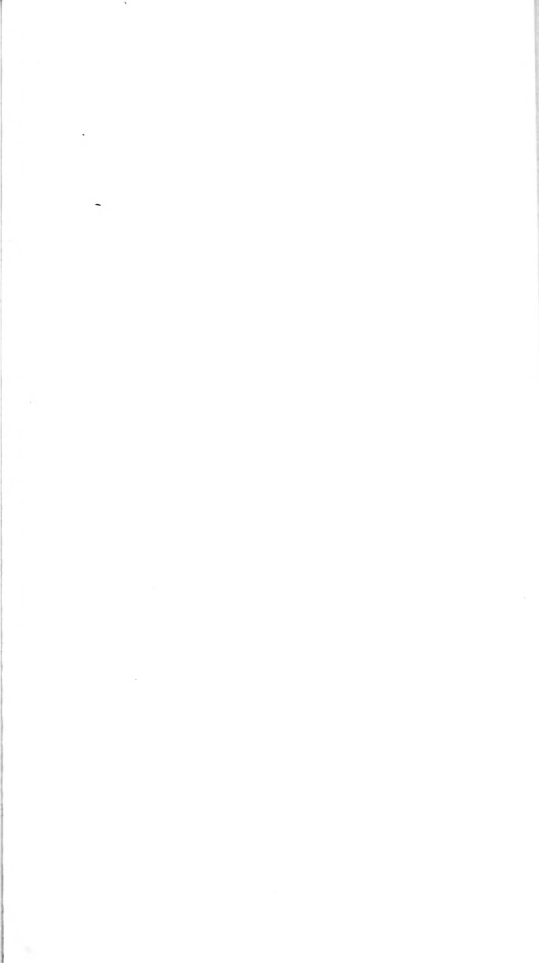
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*HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHIES*

EDITED BY

REV. M. CREIGHTON, M.A.

LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD

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OLIVER CROMWELL

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# HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHIES

*Edited by*

THE REV. M. CREIGHTON, M.A.

LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD

With Maps and Plans. Small 8vo.

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ASSISTANT-MASTER AT ETON COLLEGE

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TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

WRITTEN 1652.

"CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud  
Not of war only, but distractions rude  
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,  
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,  
And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud  
Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued ;  
While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued,  
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,  
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains  
To conquer still ; Peace hath her victories  
No less renowned than war : new foes arise  
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains :  
Help us to save free conscience from the paw  
Of hireling wolves whose Gospel is their maw."

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## CHAPTER I.

### *Early Years.*

**O**LIVER CROMWELL was born at Huntingdon, on the 25th of April, 1599. His father, Robert Cromwell, was a country gentleman of moderate means, the second son of Sir Henry Cromwell, of Hinchinbrook House, near Huntingdon. His mother's maiden name was Steward, and her family was by remote descent connected with the blood royal of Scotland and England. The original name of the Cromwell family was Williams, of Glamorganshire. They were of the same kin with that other Cromwell, Earl of Essex, the "Mauler of Monks," who spent his life in the service of Henry VIII., and lost his head as a return. Richard Williams, great-grandfather of Oliver Cromwell, was a near relative and dependent of the Earl of Essex, whose maternal name of Cromwell he assumed, and by whose favour he was enriched with the spoils of the monasteries. The Cromwells were in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. possessed of large estates in the counties of Huntingdon and Cambridge. The

first member of the family who obtained notice at Court was this Richard, who jousted before Henry VIII. at Westminster, and received as his guerdon a diamond ring from the King's hand, with the words, "Formerly thou wast my Dick, but hereafter thou shalt be my diamond." Sir Richard's son Henry was called, from his splendid way of living, "the Golden Knight." He rebuilt or enlarged the old monastic house of Hinchinbrook, and was succeeded by his son, Sir Oliver (eldest brother of Robert, the Protector's father), who soon after his father's death entertained James I. for three days on his coming into England with magnificent hospitality and presents, with such honour indeed that James on leaving Hinchinbrook said, "Marry, mon, thou hast treated me better than any one since I left Edinburgh," and created him a Knight of the Bath at his coronation.

It was on this occasion (it is probable) that the little Oliver, a boy of four years old, first saw Charles I., then Duke of York, a rickety, weak-legged, stammering child, a year younger than himself. Tradition says that the boys played together, and that their play ended in strife, and a bloody nose to "Baby Charles." Other traditions tell us (what is not difficult to believe) that he was a violent-tempered, unruly child, domineering over his playfellows, and causing trouble to his elders; not the only naughty boy who has grown up to be a great man.

His father, Robert Cromwell, lived in a house in Huntingdon town, connected with which was a brewery. It is probable that the story current during Oliver's lifetime, that he himself, as well as his father, was a brewer at Huntingdon, is true. The Cromwells had carried on a brewery business both at Putney and at Huntingdon for several generations; but they were also among the first gentry of the county, connected with other families of the landed gentry settled in Huntingdonshire and the neighbouring counties—Whalleys, Hampdens, Barringtons, and others. Robert Cromwell lived, as a younger son, almost under the shadow of the family house of Hinchinbrook; and his profession was that of other gentlemen of his standing, connected as much with land as with trade. He sat in Parliament, and did such local business as came to his hand, living "a modest and manful life in his station there."

At Huntingdon Oliver's boyhood was spent, except for occasional visits to the houses of his relations at Ramsey, Ely, and elsewhere, according to the grave and hospitable manner of the time. His father sent him to the Free School of Huntingdon, the master of which was Doctor Thomas Beard, a Puritan divine, and a man of some learning and ability. Oliver is said to have been a careless and irregular scholar, but a hard student when it suited his humour. A story is told connected with this time, which, whether true or false, is too striking to be omitted. The scholars of the Free School acted, as was the custom, a comedy called

*Lingua ; or, The Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses.* The part which fell to Cromwell was that of Tactus, who in the play is made to stumble at a robe and crown set in his way. He takes up the crown and sets it on his own head with the words—

“How gallantly it fits me ! sure the knave  
Measured my head that wrought this coronet.  
They lie, that say complexions cannot change :  
My blood’s ennobled, and I am transformed  
Into the sacred temper of a king.”

A dream or vision is also recorded of a mysterious personage, who foretold to the boy that he should be the greatest man in England ; and although such stories may seem to fit with too easy a coincidence into the life which followed, it is not unlikely that the moody boy augured greatness from such indications as well as from the genius within him.

The first authentic fact in Oliver’s life is his entrance as a fellow-commoner at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, the record of which is still preserved in the books of the College, and bears date April 23rd, 1616, the day (as it has been remarked) of Shakspeare’s death.

Sidney was a Puritan College. The two “learned and Protestant Foundations” were Sidney and Emmanuel, great nurseries of sectaries, or preservers of religion, as the one party or the other called them. Sir Symonds d’Ewes, the son of a Suffolk squire of Puritan opinions, who entered the

University about this time as a fellow-commoner of St. John's, gives a lively account of the state of Cambridge, and the common life of the undergraduates. We read in his diaries of careful studies in obsolete books, of immense length of sermons, religious meetings, long prayers, and written "exercises" of piety; and, on the other hand, of "much swearing, drinking, rioting, and hatred of all piety and virtue." The religious tone of the University was, says d'Ewes, "free from all Anabaptist or Pelagian heresies," and also from the "idolatry" then brought into fashion by Laud and his party. With lights and shades somewhat stronger, life at the University bore much the same relation to English life in general as it does now. We know nothing of Cromwell's life at the University. He did not take a degree, nor do we know what studies he pursued. There or at Huntingdon he learnt so much Latin as to be able in the days of his greatness to give answer to an ambassador in that language; and he learnt to value, as we know from his advice to his son in after years, the study of history, mathematics, and "cosmography." There is nothing to show that he was at any time of his life a reader of many books, or possessed of a high literary education; and as far as his University life is concerned, the probability is, that he wasted his time in the company of other young gentlemen, preserving no more decorum than was expected from his station in society, and as a

member of a college professing religion beyond its neighbours: perhaps less, if half the stories told of his life be true. Oliver probably frequented bull-baiting, cock-fights, and diceing matches more than sermons and prayer-meetings; but where all is uncertain, we can gather little that is trustworthy from among the slanders and scandals repeated of him many years after by those who hated alike his person and his work.

So many stories are told that it is likely there is truth in some of them; but not one has sufficient evidence to be set down as a fact. Thus we are told that he was the terror of the tinkers and vagabonds, with whom he would play quarter-staff; that he would not pay his tavern scores, so that the ale-wives cried, "Here comes young Cromwell; shut up the doors;" that he offended his uncle, Sir Oliver, by gross and unmannerly behaviour at some Hinchinbrook Christmas revels; and so forth. It may be set down to his credit, though on no better authority, that after he became a Puritan he repaid money which he had won at play. Whatever may have been the excesses of his youthful years—and those recorded are rather instances of rusticity and rude horse-play than of debauchery—the purity of his later life resembles the lighting up of the cresset of Henry V. "The greater the sinner, the greater the saint," is not always untrue. Cromwell never went halves in anything; and it is hardly possible that a nature so storm-tossed as his, not yet



moored to the Bible-rock to which his mature age held so firmly, should not have been driven about by many winds of opposing passions. One utterance of his own gives us nearly all that is certainly known of his way of life as a young man: "You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light! I was a chief—the chief of sinners. This is true: I hated godliness, and yet God had mercy on me." But so said the straitest of Pharisees—St. Paul, and so have said other saints who knew the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and felt how great a gulf separated their former life from that which they led as Christians.

On leaving Cambridge, perhaps on account of his father's death, June, 1617, Cromwell went up to London to study law. Of law he probably learned as much as a gentleman need learn—not enough to practice, but enough to look after his own affairs, to value the law of England, to see its faults, and wish for their amendments. His legal studies, such as they were, did not last long; and within three years after his removal from Cambridge we find him (August, 1620, æt. 21) settled in his own county as a country gentleman, married, and attending to his farms, and such local business as came in his way. His marriage took place in St. Giles's Church, Cripplegate, 22nd August, 1620. His wife was Elizabeth Bouchier, daughter of Sir James Bouchier, a citizen of London, and owner of land near Felsted, in Essex. Both his

wife and himself were connected with the Hampdens, of Hampden, people of high standing in Bucks, who are said to have helped to bring about the match.

Here then, at all events, ends the foolish record of youthful excesses, though the lying industry of his enemies carries the tale of them on through his middle life. He took his bride to Huntingdon, where his mother continued to live in her son's house. Here were born four sons and two daughters, Bridget and Elizabeth. The eldest son, Robert, died at the age of eighteen, a boy of great promise, the child of his father's prayers—"eximie pius juvenis, Deum timens supra multos," as his burial register tells us. It was of his death that Oliver on his death-bed said, "It went to my heart like a dagger, indeed it did." The second, Oliver, was killed in the war somewhere about the time his father fought at Marston Moor. The others were Richard the Protector (born 1626), and Henry (born 1628), a man of energy and ability, who served the State well as Governor of Ireland. His other daughters, Mary and Frances, were born some years later.

Cromwell changed his residence twice in these years, moving first to St. Ives, about 1631, where we find some trace of him, as paying, when summoned, his quota of ship-money, which his cousin, John Hampden, refused to pay, and thereby set alight a fire in England which did not soon burn out; and attending church at St. Ives,

where he might be seen listening to the vicar's sermons "with a piece of red flannel round his neck, being subject to inflammation." His second remove was to Ely, in 1636, on the death of his uncle, Sir Robert Steward, who died in January of that year, leaving Oliver heir to the bulk of his property in that neighbourhood.

Cromwell's estate, after this accession of property, amounted to £400 or £500 a year, a sum equivalent to some £2,000 of our money. There were more gentlemen of moderate means living on their property then than now. From the great landowners down to the yeomen who farmed their own twenty, fifty, or a hundred acres of land, there was then a continued gradation of freeholders. Some, as Cromwell himself, ranked high amongst the country gentry, transacted county business of the highest importance, and, if capable men, had their chance of being sent as Parliament men to Westminster. All made their home in the country, and seldom visited London. Many of them then, as a hundred years later, were mere boors, who spent their days in hunting and cock-fighting, and their evenings in drinking and gaming. The accounts we have of Cromwell's youth, if they are untrue of him in particular, give a true and not an agreeable picture of the life led by the East Country squires of the seventeenth century.

But side by side with this rough and vicious way of living had been growing up, ever since

Bloody Mary had lighted the fires of Smithfield and Norwich, that strong popular feeling for religion and virtue which is called Puritanism. It was in the counties to the north-east and south-east of London that the Marian persecution had raged most hotly; and there more than elsewhere the blood of the martyrs had been the seed of the Church.

The history of religion in the first generation of the seventeenth century, the years in which Cromwell was growing up to middle age, is written, so to say, on the back of the page. Little positive can be learnt of it. The chroniclers of religion tell of its growth chiefly by describing the means taken by those in power to check and thwart it.

Events both at home and abroad during half a century had made the question of religion more prominent than any other. The Bible took possession of the minds of the English people, and there grew up in the reign of Elizabeth a generation of Englishmen who resembled in opinion rather that school which had its day of destroying and remodelling under Edward VI., than that which was formed under the influence of the Queen herself. Then, however, as always, except when now and then some strong conviction has prevailed for a short time over moderate measures, the English people desired moderation in religion and in politics. There is nothing very noble in this temper. We must admire the strength of purpose

and spiritual fervour of Hot Gospellers, martyred Seminarists, and Popish Inquisitors, more than the selfish coldness of the crowds who went to mass or to sermon according as the ruling powers bade them. But the one or the other extreme led to tyranny and cruelty; and in their hatred of cruelty and tyranny the English people were more noble than their rulers. The nation, never prone to superstition, accepted with manly pride the gift of free thought which Henry's open Bible promised them. The Bible was the pledge of their freedom, and they interpreted the Bible by the popular theology of their day. Hence England was changed in fifty years from a Catholic to a Puritan nation. But her high clergy, under the patronage of Elizabeth and James I., tried to uphold ceremony and dogma, which were being held year after year more and more superstitious and idolatrous. Elizabeth had never been a strong Protestant. Her successor, holding for himself a set of doctrines rather than a belief, inclined to a theology which should keep clear of the "errors of Rome," but above all things uphold the Royal power. "No Bishop, no King" was one of his favourite maxims. "*Schismatici contra episcopos non audiendi*" was another; and a measure of his toleration may be found in the Hampton Court Conference, to which but four Nonconformist ministers were admitted, to be browbeaten and silenced by eighty Anglican divines. Arch-

bishop Bancroft, "a diligent Law Beagle," did his best to put down Puritanism, and employed without sparing all the power—illegal, it is true, but none the less real—put into his hands by the Court of High Commission. Preaching was discouraged, and the reading of homilies recommended in its stead. With the Act of Uniformity and the Book of Canons as their instrument, and the Court of High Commission as their motive power, the High Church dignitaries kept up a continual persecution of those clergymen who, though they did not leave the Church of England, earned the title of Nonconformist by objecting, fancifully perhaps, but sincerely, to certain superstitious usages enjoined by the formularies of the church. Archbishop Abbot, "a perfect Puritan," and made archbishop almost by accident, did what he could to modify the rigour of the High Church party. But Abbot himself was guilty of burning two heretics. He was disliked at Court, and on his final disgrace his power fell into the hands of William Laud, the most mischievous prelate that has ever borne rule in England. There never was a spirit more opposed than his to the spirit of liberty. Good government consists more in leaving alone than in giving orders and seeing them obeyed. Bad laws can be put up with and wholesomely neglected; but bad laws rigidly and minutely administered are intolerable. Laud's restless activity took note of everything. In every parish the church rates were increased by

orders for new church furniture, altar rails, and clean surplices. The communion tables were moved from the accustomed place without the consent of the parishioners. If they got lecturers to preach to them, their lecturers were thwarted at every turn, compelled to wear the surplice, and prevented from preaching on the ground that catechising must take precedence of sermons. A number of gentlemen, merchants and others of Puritan opinions, bought up advowsons of livings with a view to presenting divines of their own way of thinking. This was declared to be illegal. The Universities were searched with the same rigour. Nor did penalties stop at ecclesiastical censures and sequestrations. The pillory, and the hangman's shears and branding-irons, were ready for the unlucky offenders who came under Laud's jurisdiction in the Star Chamber. Persecution of a more manly sort had failed under Mary, and this petty teasing and bullying was certain to fail now. Gentle measures might have made it possible for High and Low Church to live together; the half-Jewish scruples on the one side about the surplice, the sign of the cross, and the ring in marriage, the half-Romish attention to genuflexions, vestments, candles, on the other side, would have died out in a generation, as, in fact, they did after the Restoration, condemned by the common-sense of the country. But the more Laud worked to repress Puritan doctrine, the wider spread the contagion of Puritanism, until

all England was divided into two camps. In every parish, in town and country, were stored up the materials which were soon to burst into the flame of civil war. Hence the bitterness of hatred which defaced cathedrals and churches, and sent out into misery and beggary the wives and children, first of Anglican, then of Puritan divines. Yet persecution makes martyrs, and there are no more beautiful instances of patience and suffering for conscience' sake than are furnished by the saints of England and Scotland, whether they suffered for the Church or the Bible, for the King or for the People.

It is difficult to understand any bygone age, and especially an age which has been misunderstood and misrepresented by almost all writers for two hundred years past. The common idea of a Puritan is of that type of which no doubt instances were to be found ;

“For neither man nor angel can discern  
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks  
Invisible except to God alone.”

Such false Puritans are satirized by their contemporaries as “saint-seeming, Bible-bearing, hypocritical Puritans,” speaking through their noses, quoting the Bible at every word, possessed with the “vices of devils, not of men ;” sourly opposed to all innocent amusement, but leading no better lives than their neighbours ; making long prayers for a show, but as little inspired with true religious feeling as the Papists, whose



religion they professed to abhor. When to the sins of censoriousness and hypocrisy was added the crime of rebellion against Church and King, the picture was complete; and, drawn with such rough strokes, and in such glaring colours, it was easily accepted as the true portrait of the Puritan, when at the Restoration, and for a century more, the death of Charles I. had made the name of Puritan hateful to all lovers of settled government. But the true account is written in the unaffected notices left by Puritans themselves in private diaries, memoirs, and letters, in sermons and tracts, in the votes of Parliament, and the proceedings of the Westminster Assembly; not always to be found without difficulty, or read without tediousness, so faint and dead to our ears is the language in which they are written; and therefore not conveying so easy an impression as the satirical sketches and angry caricatures of Royalists. Sir Symonds d'Ewes, a country gentleman and a practical man of business, with nothing of enthusiasm in his character, shows us how religion was openly professed in families and by individuals. He speaks of periodical fasts, of self-examination, and religious exercises lasting for eight or nine hours at a time, by means of which, "having obtained assurance, he wrote out the evidence of marks and signs for it, consisting of threescore and four signs or marks drawn from several graces . . . and enriched the margin with further proofs and authorities . . . wherein he

found much comfort and reposedness of spirit, being more careful than ever to walk warily, to avoid sin, and lead a godly life." Sir Symonds d'Ewes was not a Dissenter, but a strict Churchman; and there is no doubt that his way of life was that of most religious families. The greater number of the clergy who were called "Puritan" were Conformists; or if they were called "Non-conformists," it was because they had scruples about some disputed points, such as the sign of the cross in baptism, the position of the altar in churches, the surplice, or the question of kneeling or sitting at the Lord's Supper. They were the most active of the clergy, and were especially influential as preachers and lecturers in the towns, and particularly in London, for many years the headquarters of Puritanism.

Amidst this waste of bitterness it is pleasant to find "full many a soft green isle" in the homes of good men and women. We cannot read the memoirs of Mrs. Hutchinson, the life of George Herbert, the saint of Bemerton, or of Nicholas Ferrar and his mother, and their "Protestant nunnery" at Little Gidding, and not be sure that amidst all the evils which were ripening into civil war there was in England as much piety and charity then as at any other period of our history. It was owing to the fanaticism and stupidity of those in power, on each side of the quarrel, that piety and charity were transformed into superstition and cruelty.

It was in the midst of influences such as these that Cromwell's religious opinions and practices were formed. No thinking man could fail to be deeply interested in the struggle which was going on; no man of character could fail to take strongly one side or another. Cromwell never hesitated long about choosing a side, and his choice once made, it was impossible for him not to take immediate action. His temperament was at once moody and practical. We catch a glimpse of him as being "most splenetic" and "valde melancholicus;" thinking that he was on the point of death, that the church steeple would fall upon him; and having "fancies" about the Town Cross. It was during these years that that "conversion" took place of which there is no outer record beyond his own words—"I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me," but of which his whole life gives evidence, and without which his life would have been (as some would have it still) a monstrous contradiction and hypocrisy from beginning to end.

The riddle of Cromwell's life will never be easy to read; but one end of the clue is at all events to be found in this conversion—a change of mind doubtless accompanied by sharp pangs of repentance, long prayers and fastings, self-torturing perplexities, until after "*Mesech*, which they say signifies *prolonging*, and *Kedar*, which signifies *blackness*," his burden, like Christian's, fell off at the foot of the Cross, and he was able to say,

"Though He do prolong, yet He will, I trust, bring me to His tabernacle, to His resting-place."

It cannot be too often insisted upon, not only that "a hero cannot be a hypocrite," but that Cromwell's life is unintelligible if we suppose that he merely took up the cant of the time, and passed for a religious man till he was found out to be a knave. Whatever tincture of dishonesty, of Machiavelian subtlety, later events may have given to Cromwell's life, there is no more reason for believing him to have been a hypocrite at this time than any other member of the great Puritan body in England. Groans, tears, prayers, fastings, were in those days the natural accompaniment of a serious religion; and though the language is out of date, the truth of feeling still remains. If, then, Cromwell was during these years earnestly occupied in "seeking the Lord," it is the most momentous period of his life, the future course of which was, according to his own belief, determined by the guidance which he now found, and never lost. On his deathbed Oliver asked one of his chaplains whether it was possible to fall from grace; when he received the answer, "No," "Then," he said, "I am safe; for I am sure I was once in a state of grace." At one time of his life, then, he must have had assurance, and assurance could only be obtained by sincerity. It is the sincerity of Cromwell which has always been doubted. It is worth while to try and understand what such sincerity means, and to consider whether

without it such a life as he led would have been in any sense possible.

Cromwell was not, as Carlyle has painted him, an almost perfect hero and saint. He committed great faults, and on so great a scale faults may be crimes. It is the shadow of these crimes thrown upon his life which makes it difficult to believe in his sincerity; yet a man may be sincere in his errors, though his errors as well as his merits exceed in greatness those of other men. No one ever used men more for his own ends. We believe that his ends were in the main wise and good, and that he sought them sincerely. But he used men as he found them, and turned the folly of fools and the knavery of knaves to his own ends without scruple; and this he held to be lawful. We are not concerned here to ask whether all Cromwell's actions were right and just, free from selfishness and double-dealing; but whether in the main he was or was not a sincere man, is the first and most important question of all towards a right understanding of his life and character.

The question of sincerity will occur again and again in the course of this biography. We will leave it here, only asking the reader not to be content with any light theory of hypocrisy and ambition; for by such a theory Cromwell's life can never be explained.

## CHAPTER II.

### Government by Prerogative.

CHARLES I. having got rid of two Parliaments without much ceremony or courtesy, and finding himself again short of money in consequence of two costly and unprofitable wars ; finding also that he had difficulty in raising money by unlawful means ; determined to call another Parliament. His third Parliament met at Westminster, in March, 1628, and sat for about a year. In this Parliament Cromwell made his first appearance as a Member. His uncle, Sir Oliver, having sold Hinchinbrook, was living at Ramsey, and did not seek re-election as Member for Huntingdonshire ; but young Oliver, though he could not aspire to be Knight of the Shire, was elected for the town by the aid of the family interest and his own hopeful character.

The two grand Acts of the Parliament of 1628 were the Petition of Right and the Remonstrance, or Representation of Grievances, in which, after a stormy debate led by the great lawyer, old Sir Edward Coke, and carried on "with much weep-

ing and shedding of tears, the Duke of Buckingham was named as the chief cause of all our miseries, both at home and abroad." The Petition was ratified by the King, and the Remonstrance was presented. Parliament was then prorogued from the end of June to the following spring; but before it met again Buckingham had been stabbed by Felton, and the King was without a chief minister. Sir Symonds d'Ewes, of whose Puritanism we have spoken, says of this Parliament: "I cannot deny but the greater part of the House were either truly religious or morally honest men." His words are a remarkable testimony to the strength of Puritanism in England; for the House of Commons at that time consisted almost entirely of gentlemen owning land, and was elected by the gentry and yeomen, or townsmen of moderate means. In such an assembly, with experienced Parliament men to lead them, a young Member of no commanding family or reputation was not likely to be much noticed. Always an ungraceful speaker, with a "sharp and untuneable voice," a rough presence, and a bad manner, Cromwell did not aim at any renown of eloquence, and spoke but seldom. He did not, however, then or ever, avoid work where work was to be done. He was put on the Committee for Religion in 1629, and in one of their sittings (11th February), made his first recorded speech, sharply attacking Dr. Alabaster, a fantastic High Churchman, for "preaching flat Popery at Paul's Cross," for which he had been

commended by the Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Neale. Cromwell went on to say that it was by this bishop's means that Manwaring, who had been censured in the late session of Parliament, and declared incapable of any ecclesiastical dignity, had yet been promoted to a rich living. "If these be steps to Church preferment," said he, "what may we expect." Cromwell carried his point, and the Bishop of Winchester was named, together with Laud, in the new Remonstrance which was set on foot this year.

The quarrel between King and Commons growing more bitter, Charles I. dissolved the Parliament of 1628-9 in haste and anger, and thenceforward for eleven years governed, by the advice of Strafford and Laud, without a Parliament and without consulting the will of the nation. His despotism was neither wantonly cruel nor capricious. The people (says Clarendon) were angered rather than grieved. The taxes were moderate, and the money they brought in was not ill spent. Justice could be had in the courts of law, if not in the Star Chamber; property was protected, and trade flourished. But the people of England were not disposed to put up with a despotism, good or bad. Sooner or later it was certain that a Parliament would be called, which would reassert the ancient rights of taxation and freedom from arbitrary imprisonment, and would put an end to Laud's "innovations" in religion. The King could go on governing at his own will only so long as he kept clear of foreign politics and domestic quarrels; any



serious danger would bring with it the need of money and the necessity for calling a Parliament.

During this interval of eleven years of personal government, when even to speak of advising the King to summon a Parliament was forbidden by Royal Proclamation, Cromwell lived a quiet life in his own home, attending to his estates, and making himself one of the most important men in the counties of Huntingdon and Cambridge.

Of public business in which Oliver during these years was engaged, there remains some obscure notice referring to the drainage in the Fen Country. The Court, always at a loss for money, had thought to make money of this public work, begun some years before, by selling the right to some of its profits to courtiers, or monopolizing them for the Treasury. Cromwell, complaining that the grants of land were too large, and the interests of the landowners and of the poor too little consulted, put himself at the head of the party in the Fen country itself which opposed the diversion into the King's pockets of money which belonged to the people. Though the design was good, the danger of corrupt dealing probably seemed greater than the benefit of improved drainage. A few years later came the Civil War, and fen draining, however useful, had to give way to graver business. But Cromwell never lost sight of the project, and when he was in power furthered the work, and punished rioters who tried to hinder it.

Then, as always, Cromwell did not shrink from the responsibility of an unpopular or dangerous action when the need of it appeared. He gained by this bold opposition to the Court party great note in the Eastern Counties, and, it is said, was popularly called the "Lord of the Fens." This early reputation will account for his great power from the first in the Eastern Association, and for his election to Parliament for the town of Cambridge in the spring of 1640, whatever intrigue may have accompanied that election.

## CHAPTER III.

### *The Long Parliament.*

LAUD'S interference with religious matters in Scotland had brought things to a rebellion. The King marched an Army into Scotland, but found the rebels so strong that he had to make terms, and retire. This occurred in 1638 and 1639; then the quarrel broke out again, and the King and Strafford determined to crush the threatened rebellion by force of arms. If Charles had not strained the patience of his subjects to the last point he would have been able at any moment to rely upon their aid against the Scots, their ancient enemies, and not endeared to them by the favour which James I. had shown for twenty years to his countrymen, when "promotion," as it was said, "came from the North." But the cause of the Scotch Rebellion was believed by more than half England to be that of the true religion. The English cared for good government in secular affairs; but they cared still more for the security of the Protestant religion, threatened by the King's

marriage with a Papist, his dealings with Rome, his neglect of the Protestants in the Palatinate, and his interference in Church ritual and preaching. The common danger made the Scots appear patriots rather than rebels, and the King's call for help from his Parliament was only answered by the cry for redress of grievances.

The elections went against the Court party. The Parliament, opened 13th April, 1640, listened coldly to the King's account of his policy since the last Parliament, and the causes which had led him to call another; and without further delay proceeded to consider *grievances*. The King's Government found absolutely no defenders, except among his own Ministers. The first petition against ship-money, monopolies, and other means of extortion was presented by Sir Arthur Capel, the same man who lost his head for the King in 1648; and among those who attacked the King's policy are to be found many who were prominent in arms for his cause during the Rebellion. The Cavaliers did not fight for abuses. The difference between them and their opponents was mainly this, that the Country Party required certain guarantees against abuse of the Royal power, or such use of it as the Tudors had made; whereas the Royalists thought the King's word against abuses enough to prevent their recurrence, and preferred to run this risk rather than endanger Royalty in its very existence.

The King required supply. The Commons

answered by appointing Committees to consider Grievances relating to Religion, Property, and Privilege. It was now that Pym made his great speech on grievances, which gave the key-note to all that followed. He spoke for liberty of the subject, privilege of Parliament, the rights of property, and against innovations in religion, illegal exactions, the creation of monopolies, military charges, ship-money, "although there be a (legal) judgment for it," the abuse of the right of Royal Proclamation "never intended to confer absolute power," the infrequency of Parliaments; and left untouched none of the illegal actions by which the country had been harassed and injured. He was not afraid to hint at possible danger in the highest quarters. "We know how unfortunate Henry III. and other princes have been by the occasion of such breaking of their laws. I pray God that we never see such times." Such was the temper of the House that they refused to attend to the King's pressing appeal, that "the supply was of no use at all unless speedily," and treated as a breach of privilege the Lords' proposal that they should trust "the word, not only of a King, but a gentleman."

Finding that he was going to get no supply without redress of grievances, the King dissolved this Parliament also (5th May) after it had sat little more than three weeks, declaring that he meant to raise money "by other methods." An

Army was raised; but not an Army fit to look in the face the Scots, well-appointed as they were, commanded by old soldiers who had learnt their trade under Gustavus Adolphus and his captains, and burning with zeal for Bible and Covenant. The Scots in their turn invaded England; one skirmish was enough to show the weakness of the Royal Army. Not even Strafford's courage and counsel could help the King to beat his enemies. The "Great Council of Peers," which Charles had called with some confused idea of following a mediæval precedent, could do nothing but advise the calling of a Parliament, and this advice, however hateful, the King must now follow. He had spoken before this to Strafford of a Parliament as "that hydra alike cunning and malicious," and nothing but necessity could have brought him to this pass. To summon a Parliament now was to confess himself beaten, and to give up the policy of fifteen years' government.

Cromwell was again elected as Member for the borough of Cambridge, and sat in this Parliament, the famous Long Parliament, till he himself dissolved it in 1653. He was already one of the most important men in the Eastern Counties. He was known "as a man who would set well at the mark," knowing his own mind, and keeping his own counsel. He was always ready; and when the time came for action, had not to think what was to be done. "I assure you," he says himself, "if once we let time pass by, we shall seek in vain

to recover it . . . and those who are not punctual in small matters, of what account are they when it shall please Him to call us forth, if we be not watchful and ready?"

This inestimable quality of readiness gains recognition more quickly and surely than perhaps any other of those which give the right to command; and we are not surprised to find that, "in the very beginning" of this Parliament, he was "very much hearkened to," rough appearance and clumsy oratory having never been in an English House of Commons a bar to hearing a man who knows what he has to say. Here is the well-known description of Cromwell as he appeared to one who saw him for the first time in these days.

"The first time that ever I took notice of him," writes Sir Philip Warwick, "was in the very beginning of the Parliament held in November, 1640, when I vainly thought myself a courtly young gentleman; for we courtiers valued ourselves much upon our good clothes. I came one morning into the House well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking, whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled; for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor. His linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar. His hat was without a hatband; his stature was of a good size; his sword stuck

close to his side; his countenance swollen and reddish; his voice sharp and untunable; and his eloquence full of fervour."

His first act in this Parliament was to present the petition of John Lilburne, a North-Country gentleman, who had been barbarously used by a Star Chamber judgment. He was destined to give Oliver himself trouble enough in later years; a man of a hedgehog spirit, with a genius for putting a good cause in the wrong; of whom it was said "that if there were none living but himself, John would be against Lilburne, and Lilburne against John." We hear of Cromwell also as presenting another petition amongst a multitude of personal "grievances" from a servant of Prynne's, who "had dispersed libels;" and again on a question of enclosure of commons, in which he put himself in opposition to Lord Manchester, a great man in the Eastern Counties, and his son, Lord Mandeville.\* Cromwell, it seems, was already no worshipper of lords.

He appears to have been diligent in attendance in Parliament, but not to have taken the lead in a House which was already well supplied with leaders. He had indeed no marked parliamentary talent, and no great respect for Parliaments. In age he stood midway between the veterans Pym and Selden, who were fifty-six years of age, and the brilliant knot of young reformers, Hyde, Falkland, Fiennes, Vane, and others, none of whom was much past thirty. His

\* Afterwards called to the Upper House as Lord Montagu of Kimbolton.



own age was forty-one; and within a few years of him were his cousins, Hampden and St. John, Marten, the two Wallers, one of them also his cousin, Holles, Capel, and Whitelock. It was in the main a young House, a fact worth remarking when we consider how grave and mature were its proceedings; no doubt in great measure owing to its constant deference and obedience to its leader, Pym. It is the fashion to regard Hampden as the leading spirit of the early years of the Long Parliament, but this is a mistake. Pym soon became the undisputed leader of the Country Party, which included all the strength of the House. He was one of the greatest statesmen who ever sat in an English Parliament, and his supremacy was so unquestioned as to have earned him the name of "King Pym."

The spirit of the House of Commons was bitterly hostile to the King and the Court—unfairly so it may seem, if we read it by the light of the events of the following years. But we must look upon the preceding years if we would judge fairly the position of the men of 1640. The King had broken his pledges too often to be forgiven. The battle fought in 1628 had to be fought again; or rather the public enemy (for so the King had proved himself to be) had surrendered; and it was necessary to tie his hands, and show him that his subjects were determined not to forget his past offences until they were secure from a repetition of them.

The leaders of the Commons lost no time in attacking the root and branch of despotic government. They met on the 3rd of November, 1640, and by the 11th they had set on foot the chief work of the session, the impeachment of Lord Strafford, "the grand apostate of the Commonwealth," as he was termed by Pym, who, accepting the danger as well as the honour of his place as leader, stood forward to manage his impeachment.

Strafford had begun public life as a patriot. He was one of the chief supporters of the Petition of Right; but he was always a lover of strong government. When the great hinderer of good and strong government, Buckingham, was dead, Strafford took the place open to him without scruple, and, true to his maxim of not opposing the King "except in a parliamentary way," he accepted office under Charles, and had ruled the Northern Counties and Ireland according to the King's will. His government of Ireland was severe and incorrupt, and odious to lovers of liberty as much from its virtues as its vices. Hence came the bitter hatred which made his old friend Pym say to him, "We will not leave you while your head is on your shoulders."

Not only Strafford, but other upholders of arbitrary government were struck at. Laud, Windebank, Finch, and others were impeached—ministers, bishops, judges; some fled, some were sent to the Tower. Strafford alone for the present suffered

death, set, as he had himself said, like a beacon on a hill for men to gaze at.

The whole fabric of personal government was pulled about the ears of its builders as rudely as the "monuments of idolatry" in churches and market-places were at the same time tumbled to the ground. Ship-money, forced loans, monopolies, images, "scandalous" pictures and crosses, altars, church hierarchies, all fell before the zeal of the reforming Commons. The whole ecclesiastical system of the country was reformed. The Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission, and the Council of the North, were abolished. "I have given way," said the King, "to everything that you have asked of me."

Perhaps the most important Act of all that were passed by this Parliament was that "Continuance" Bill which made it unlawful for the King to dissolve the Parliament without its own consent. The second reading of this Bill was moved by Cromwell (16th May). It was a bad law, and worked badly afterwards; but for the moment it seemed to be necessary, not only that abuses should be cleared away, but that they should be made impossible in the future.

To weld all together—for, as Cromwell said, "combination carries strength with it"—a Protestation to defend Religion and Liberty was entered into by Parliament, and sent about the country for subscription.

Meantime the King's party were busy. Plots

were laid to turn the army against the Parliament, and set up the King in full power again—plots no sooner laid than discovered; for throughout the history of the time we find that intelligence is conveyed to the leaders of both sides by means of spies, whose services are used as freely in politics as in war. If the Commons seem to be too harsh, and too distrustful of the King, it must be remembered that the King was corresponding with the leaders of the Army, with Scotland, Ireland, France, Denmark, and Holland at once, at the very time when he was granting all the demands of Parliament, and taking its chiefs into his service as Ministers of State; and that the leaders of the opposition to the Court knew all that was doing. It was necessary therefore to establish the Parliament so that it should not be in the King's power to dissolve it at his pleasure; and to inflict penalties on those who had been the ministers of absolute government; and the same sense of insecurity caused the final demand for the power of the sword, which brought about the Civil War. Good government in Church and State had been provided for, so far as that could be done by Acts of Parliament, and the National Protestation in favour of the doctrine of the Church of England and against Popery. The Scotch and English Armies were paid and disbanded (6th Aug.); but the power of the sword was still in the King's hands, and there was no doubt that he was willing to use it if necessary. Though some of the popular party had

become ministers of the King, Pym, Hampden, and other Puritan leaders had not taken office ; and the King's absence in Scotland, and the news of plots there, and even the too easy compliance of Charles with all that was asked, roused suspicion in England.

Suddenly the whole nation was thrown into a state of violent excitement by the news that the Irish Catholics had broken out into insurrection, and that a horrible massacre of the English Protestants had taken place (23rd Oct.). It is now known that no massacre was at first intended, and that what took place was greatly exaggerated. But at that time it was believed to be a Popish conspiracy for the extermination of Protestantism in Ireland ; and the King and Queen were accused of having fostered the Rebellion with a view to the invasion of England, and the destruction of Parliament and the Protestant religion. The English believed that the plan for which Strafford had, justly or unjustly, suffered death was to be carried out, and they resolved more strongly than ever to take away the King's power to do mischief. Accordingly, soon after the King's return from Scotland, towards the end of 1641, it was proposed in Parliament to settle the power of the Militia (the only lawful Army) in the hands of certain persons to be approved by Parliament. The matter went no further then, partly as being unripe, partly because news came from Scotland which seemed to show that the King was in-

tending to take measures against the popular leaders, and the Commons thought it well to lose no time in making an appeal from the King to the people. They now drew up the famous document called the Grand Remonstrance, the first act of rebellion; in fact, a declaration of war against the King (22nd Nov.). It was a lengthy document, in which were set forth in order all the instances of illegal government from the beginning of the reign. The Remonstrance was carried by a majority of only eleven, and the motion to print it, and thereby appeal directly to the nation, passed at three in the morning amidst a scene of uproar, of which Sir Philip Warwick says, "I thought we had all sat in the valley of the shadow of death."

The Remonstrance was intended as a great party move to divide the House, and show which party were content with the results already obtained, and which were for pressing the King till he either gave up the sword, or drew it against his people. It marks also the point at which the majority of the House of Commons determined to force the King into narrower bounds than any of his predecessors. It was a demand for surrender from the King, and a declaration of no surrender on the part of the Parliament and nation; and the closeness of the division shows that it was well understood.

How earnestly the hearts of the extreme party were set upon passing the Remonstrance is shown by the well-known, if not authenticated, story of

Cromwell whispering Falkland in the ear, "that if the Remonstrance had been rejected, he would have sold all he had the next morning, and never have seen England more; and he knew there were many other honest men of the same resolution."

The Remonstrance was presented to the King, and also published. It was indeed a manifesto to the people, and those who published it had lost all hope of a peaceful settlement of the quarrel. Matters became so threatening that a number of gentlemen offered their services as a guard to the King. The Commons rejoined by demanding again and again a guard for their own protection, under the Earl of Essex, commander of the forces south of Trent, a demand which the King constantly evaded, engaging, "on the word of a King," the security of all and every one of them from violence.

Meantime from all the neighbouring counties freeholders came riding up to London in bands of many thousands, with "papers stuck in their hats," to strengthen the resolution of the Commons. London was in uproar, "so that it was a dismal thing to all sober men to see and hear them." The names of "Roundhead" (then first "minted") and "Cavalier" were heard on all sides, and blood was shed more than once in London.

The King, thinking himself strong enough to face an open quarrel, made his counterstroke to the Remonstrance by impeaching Lord Kimbolton,\*

\* See *Index*, Manchester, Earl of, and page 50.

eldest son of the Earl of Manchester, and five Members of the Lower House, Hollis, Haslerig, Pym, Hampden, and Strode (4th Jan.). They were sent for safety into the City as soon as the King's message came. The King came down in person with a strong guard to arrest them; found them gone; hesitated; withdrew from London, which he never saw again but as a prisoner seven years later; retracted the impeachment; granted a free pardon to the accused Members; refused, yielded, and refused again the demands addressed to him by Parliament in more and more angry language; then sent the Queen and the Crown jewels into Holland, and withdrew by slow stages to Royston, Newmarket, and York. The constitutional weapon which remained in the hands of Parliament was the Militia Bill, which they took up again, and continued to press upon the King with increasing vehemence. At Newmarket he was fairly asked by Commissioners from the Parliament to grant them the nomination of Militia commanders for a limited time. He answered passionately, as his manner was, "No, by God! not for an hour;" and abruptly ending the audience, continued his progress towards York, which city he reached on the 19th of March, 1642.

The determination on the other side is expressed in Cromwell's own words: "Say to your friends that we have made up our demands to the control of the Navy and train bands of the Counties' Militia; also all forts and castles, and



with God's aid we will have them if he likes or dislikes; for he is ~~more~~ shifty every day. We must do more also, unless he does that which is right in the sight of God and man to his people." And by the brave words of Lord Say and Sele, "This is not now a time for men to think with themselves that they will be in their shops to get a little money. Let every man shut up his shop; let him take his musket; let him not think with himself 'who shall pay me;' but rather think this, 'I'll come forth to save the kingdom, to serve my God.'"

There was now no lawful government in England. The King by removing from London had left the Parliament free to govern the kingdom, a task from which they did not shrink. Henceforward, Ordinances of Parliament and Royal Proclamations take the place of regular Acts of legislative and executive, and the Parliament becomes at once the legislative and executive power wherever the King's power did not prevail. They proceeded to summon the Militia by Ordinance; on his side the King issued his Commission of Array, and called his friends around him at York.

The first act of resistance to the King was the refusal of Sir John Hotham, Governor of Hull, to admit Charles within the walls of his town, one of the strongest arsenals held for the Parliament (23rd April); but lengthy messages continued to be sent to and fro with the same unhappy result.

The King was more earnestly desirous of peace than the Parliament, who considered civil war a less evil than a return to bad government. What was offered to Charles was, as he plainly saw, to retain the name and dignity, but part with the power of a King.

After trying all means to bring about a compromise, he preferred to rest upon the loyalty of his subjects, trusting to that and to the dislike of the English to new-fangled politics and religion, and finally to "the sharp sword of a king." For means of war the Parliament had London and the sea at their command, the advantage of a compact position, and the resources of the wealthiest counties of England. Roughly speaking, the South and East were with the Parliament, the North and West for the King. A line drawn across England, from Hull to Lyme Regis, would have divided the two interests; but every town and village was divided against itself, and the greater part of the country would gladly have stood neutral. The strength of the Parliament was everywhere in the towns and the trading classes; that of the King in the country populations, the great landowners, and their retainers. Although the leaders on both sides were gentlemen of ancient estate and landed property, this was a quarrel in which the great lords could not but be drawn in greater numbers to the Court than to the country. It was a quarrel not only between King and Parliament, but between aristocracy

and democracy, privilege and equality, Church and Dissent.

With these causes of strength and weakness on either side the civil war began. The Earls of Essex and Bedford were the Parliament commanders. It was the King who first set up his standard (22nd August); but the war had, in fact, begun with the Remonstrance and the arrest of the Five Members eight months before.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *The Ironsides.*

CROMWELL'S name does not appear prominently during the progress of these events. In the beginning of 1641 he writes to a friend for some papers referring to the Scots' "desire of uniformity in religion." He is mentioned as a colonel for the service of Ireland a year later, and his name appears in several committees, notably in one which took up a message to the Lords on the occasion of one of the most important Militia votes. He and "his own beloved Vane" (young Sir Harry) are believed to have originated the "Root and Branch" Bill for the Extirpation of Prelacy, and he spoke vehemently in debate on that subject. This was in March. He was busy in getting all ready for the worst in Cambridgeshire and the neighbouring counties; but even then he had some hope of the "peaceable settling this sad business," and stopped a threatened riot at Huntingdon on the King's arriving there, though he could not prevent rioting a day or two later at Stamford. In April he writes: "The Lord hath

hardened his heart more and more; he has refused to hear reason, or to care for our cause, or religion, or peace. . . . Things go on as we all said they would. We are all on the point of now openly declaring ourselves; now may the Lord prosper us in the good cause. . . . Be as a bundle of sticks; let the offence to one be as to all. The Parliament will back us." He subscribed £500 for the relief of Ireland, a very large sum if we compare with it the subscription of £1,000 by his kinsman Hampden, a man of much larger fortune and higher standing. In July he sent arms down into Cambridgeshire, and in August he seized the magazine at Cambridge, and stopped part of the convoy of plate which the colleges were loyally sending to his Majesty at York. We catch a glimpse of him here drilling soldiers in King's Chapel, pulling down "idolatrous" ornaments in Great St. Mary's, and saying, "Your gods are a-pulling down,"—to which answer was made, not unfairly, "Our God dwells not in temples made with hands;" allowing the great Prayer Book to be torn in pieces; roughly hurrying suspected Dons up to London, and telling one of them, who asked for time "to pack up his linen," that "it was not in his commission." Henceforward he is in chief command of all operations in Cambridgeshire, and practically of the Eastern Counties "Association," which did so much to ruin the King's cause.

Cromwell had had no education in the art of

war, as Essex, Skippon, and other commanders had. The Palatinate service had not been so popular in England as in Scotland; but there were officers in both Armies, "soldiers of fortune," as they were called, who had fought under Gustavus and Bernhard of Weimar, and shared the misfortunes of the beautiful and unhappy "Queen of Hearts," Elizabeth of Bohemia, sister of Charles I. Most of those, however, who met on the mournful field of Edgehill had never seen a shot fired in anger. The London train-bands and the county militias had had some exercise in drilling, and soon showed themselves as fit for fighting as the recruits at Waterloo. But their unskilled movements scandalized the grave "soldiers of fortune," who fought by the book and by rule; and, indeed, the common belief of those engaged was that there would be but a battle or two at most and the war would be over.

We shall not follow the course of the war further than as Cromwell was engaged in it. For the first two years his action lies outside the main stream of events, and he does not come out as a great actor in great affairs till 1644. He fought, however, at Edgehill (23rd Oct.) as captain of a troop in the Lord-General's regiment—sixty-seven its number—his son Oliver being also a cornet of horse. There he may have seen, in the disgraceful rout of the Parliament's horse, that battles were not to be won by bravery only, but that discipline was needed too, and the

steadiness of purpose which makes discipline possible.

At some time in the early part of 1643, Cromwell became colonel of a regiment of horse raised in the Eastern Association, which he had been for some months binding together by all means in his power. These were the first recruits of his "Tawnies," or "Ironsides," the most famous regiment in history, worthy to rank with the soldiers of Gideon, Leonidas, Epaminondas, "saints" all of them; men of religion to cope with men of honour; "honest, religious, valiant," so their colonel called them; "a lovely company," "no Anabaptists," but "honest, sober Christians," who "expect to be used as men."

"Better," he says again, "plain men than none; but best to have men patient of wants, faithful, and conscientious in their employment. I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than what you call 'a gentleman,' and is nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed."

It is not, however, faith only that will save; he must have works as well. "Let the saddler see to the horse-gear. . . . If a man has not good weapons, horse and harness, he is as nought. . . . Our smiths are hard at work at shoes. Press me four more smiths as you come on. I must have them, yea or nay. . . . I will not allow any plunder; so pay the men, and stop their

pay to make it up. I will cashier officers and men if such is done in future." With reference to a breach of discipline, he says, "Hang the man out of hand, and I am your warrant; for he shot a boy . . . the widow's son, her only support." But, on the other hand, "Tell Ireton my mind on his shooting that spy without learning more; I like it not. I learn your troop refuse the new coats. Say this, 'Wear them, or go home.' I stand no nonsense from anyone."

The "Ironsides," or "Tawnies," so called because of their buff coats, or perhaps from the "orange-tawny," or "deep yellow" scarf, which was Essex's colours, and worn by all officers in the Parliamentary army, were (with the exception of Cromwell's "own troop of Slepe Dragoons," "the Slepe troop of hard-handed fellows, who did as he told them and asked no questions," and whose expenses were probably paid by Oliver himself) horsed and armed at their own cost. They were for the most part yeomen, small freeholders, and freeholders' sons, tilling with their own hands the farms which their ancestors had held as long as the ancestors of the lords and squires to whom they took off their hats had held theirs; a class now nearly extinct, but of great power and worth two hundred years ago.

It is of these that Whitelock says: "He had a brave regiment of horse of his countrymen, most of them freeholders and freeholders' sons, and who upon matter of conscience engaged in



this quarrel and under Cromwell. And thus being well armed within by the satisfaction of their own consciences, and without by good iron arms, they would, as one man, stand firmly and charge desperately." And of their discipline it is said, "Not a man swears but he pays his 12d.;" no plundering, no drinking, disorder, or impiety allowed.

We may quote here the well-known description of these choice soldiers given by Oliver himself many years later: "At my first going out into this engagement I saw their men were beaten at every hand. I did indeed; and I desired him (Hampden) that he would make some additions to my Lord Essex's Army, of some new regiments; and I told him I would be serviceable to him in bringing such men in as I thought had a spirit that would do something in the work. . . . 'Your troops' (said I) 'are most of them old decayed serving-men and tapsters, and such kind of fellows: and' (said I) 'their troops are gentlemen's sons, younger sons, and persons of quality. Do you think that the spirits of such base and mean fellows will ever be able to encounter gentlemen that have honour, and courage, and resolution in them? . . . You must get men of a spirit (and take it not ill what I say—I know you will not—) of a spirit above them, which is godliness—a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go; or else I am sure you will be beaten still.' I told him so; I did truly. . . . I told him I could do

somewhat in it; I did so: and I used my endeavour therein—and truly I must needs say this to you (impute it to what you please): I raised such men as had the fear of God before them, and made some conscience of what they did; and from that day forward (I must say to you) they were never beaten, and wherever they were engaged against the enemy they beat continually—and truly this is matter of praise to God.”

We are not to suppose that the conquerors of Naseby and Dunbar sprang into being full armed. At the first the King had the better material, but his Army lost while the other gained in strength and solidity as the war went on, and men became more reckless and cruel.

## CHAPTER V.

### *The Association.*

CROMWELL'S business was to keep the Royalists out of the Eastern Counties, to bring Lincolnshire over, and to join the forces of the East with those of the North, where the Fairfaxes were trying to make head against the Earl of Newcastle, commander of what the Puritans called "the Queen's Popish Army." Lord Capel was his first enemy, the petitioner against grievances in the hopeful early days of 1640. He, like Falkland, Hyde, Colepeper, and many others, had turned sadly away from reform changed into rebellion, and had thrown in his lot with King and Church. Cromwell frightened him away for the time, "in a very short space." Cromwell made Cambridge his head-quarters, was busy collecting money (for, as he said, "without money a man is as naught"), "zealously cleansing" the Universities, raising fortifications round the town; hunting up defaulters, and suggesting a tax upon Papists and other disaffected persons; looking up and "securing"

malignants at Norwich, St. Albans, Lowestoft, and elsewhere.

The Association of the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, and Hertford was soon joined by Lincoln and Huntingdon; and the seven counties thus formed into one block are called "the Association," and were pretty well free from enemies by the end of 1643, "having had a man of due forwardness among them."

Lord Manchester, the owner of Hinchinbrook House, was the nominal head of the Association; but Cromwell was never second in any action, whatever his place might be. The success of the Association was due to him, and him only.

The end of 1642 had seen London threatened by the King, after Edgehill fight, and saved by the vigour of Philip Skippon, and the resolution of its inhabitants, who turned out with spade and pick, like the Parisians in 1870, and showed so bold a front at Turnham Green, that the King decided to withdraw; whilst at the same time Dalbier and the other soldiers of fortune in the Rebels' Army shook their heads, and advised Essex not to risk an engagement. The two Armies retired into winter quarters at Oxford and London.

In the spring of 1643 Essex took Reading, which thenceforward was a principal post for the Parliamentary Army, after which feat of arms he lay sluggish and immoveable in the neighbourhood, "eating and drinking for four or five months," and letting the summer go by without action.

Although Hampden, and those who wished to push the war on, urged him to make a bold move, he excused himself on the ground of want of supplies, and the sickness of his troops; while it was already rumoured at head-quarters that Essex had no wish to drive the King to extremities, and had hopes of peace from the overtures which the Royal party were making.

The rest of the year 1643 did nothing for the Parliamentary cause. The eastern Army was to have joined with that of Essex, and attacked Oxford; but Essex would not venture anything. The Royalists overran Yorkshire, beat Lord Fairfax and his son at Atherton Moor (30th June), and threatened Hull. Sir Ralph Hopton beat the Parliament's forces at Stratton, in Cornwall (16th May); and Sir William Waller lost at Lansdown (5th July) his too easily acquired title of "William the Conqueror."

To complete the disasters of the year, Bristol was surrendered to Rupert (27th July), Hampden was killed in a skirmish at Chalgrove (18th June), near Oxford; and the wisest man in England, John Pym, died at Westminster, on the 8th of December: not, however, till he had accomplished what proved to be one of the great actions of the war—the association of the Scots to the English Rebellion.

After much discussion, and the interchange of numerous and lengthy state papers, a "Solemn League and Covenant" was entered into between the English Parliament and the Scots, by which both

nations bound themselves to unite in maintaining in Scotland the form of religion established there, and setting up in England a form of Church government "according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches."

It was only in the Eastern Counties, where Cromwell did everything, that the Parliament's cause prospered. His object, as we have said, was to add Lincolnshire to the Association, and so to bridge over the interval between the Associated Counties and Yorkshire, and cut off the enemy in the North from his allies at Oxford and in the Southern Counties. The chief obstacle to this design was then, and to the close of the war, the strong place of Newark, commanding the passage of the Trent, the key of the King's position, Oxford and Newark being, as it were, the King's two eyes.

In March, 1643, Cromwell surprised a "great combination held among the malignants" at Lowestoft, thus securing Norfolk for the Parliament. We hear of him at Lynn, Nottingham, and Peterborough, where, "in pursuance of the thorough reformation, he did most miserably deface the Cathedral Church, break down the organs, and destroy the glass windows, committing many outrages on the Church of God, which were not acted by the Goths in the sack of Rome, and are most commonly forborne by the Turks when they possess themselves by force of a Christian city."

He had a hard task to perform in the conquest

of Lincolnshire. The Earl of Newcastle fortified Newark, and held it in spite of all that Cromwell could do, partly in consequence of the delay or unreadiness of his coadjutors, who did not keep appointments or divided their forces—Cromwell's plan being "to draw speedily to a head," so as to act with their united power. In one way or another the great design was hindered for the present; but "the brave and valiant soldier, Colonel Cromwell, gave the Cavaliers at Newark a great overthrow near Grantham," in the month of May of this year. His letter, written on the same night as the action, which took place late in the evening, tells us how with a "handful" of troops (about twelve troops to twenty-four) "whereof some of them so poor and broken that you shall seldom see worse . . . it pleased God to cast the scale of victory on our side." After half an hour's firing "we advanced to charge them, and advancing our whole body, after many shot on both sides (but it pleased God that their bullets still flew over our heads, and did us no harm) we came on with our troops a pretty round trot, they standing firm to receive us; but after about half an hour in that posture, and some great shot spent on both sides, our men most valiantly and resolutely marched up, and fiercely charged on them; whereupon, by God's providence, their hearts instantly failed them, a spirit of trembling (it seemed) came upon them, and they were immediately routed, and ran all away, and we had the execution of them

two or three miles at least, and I verily believe some of our soldiers killed two or three men apiece in the pursuit . . . and we took four or five of their colours, and so marched away to Lincoln."

Newark was an impassable barrier on the road to Yorkshire; in which county, however, the Parliamentary Army had a turn of fortune, "a victory, nay, even a miracle," in the capture of Wakefield, in the same month of May. Affairs in the Eastern Counties were beginning to be serious; and Cromwell, at his wits' end for men and money, writes thus: "I beseech you hasten the supply to us; forget not money. I press not hard, though I do so need that I assure you the foot and dragoons are ready to mutiny. Lay not too much upon the back of a poor gentleman, who desires, without much noise, to lay down his life, and bleed the last drop, to serve the cause and you."

Soon after this Cromwell was at Stamford and the neighbourhood, "battering" Burleigh House: (on which service, it is said, he first made the acquaintance of Ireton, his future son-in-law and "second self"). He relieved Gainsborough after a sharp fight "horse to horse," disputing it with their swords and pistols "a pretty time; all keeping close order, so that one could not break the other." They threw provisions into the town, thus effecting their object; and yet, after all, only got off "in disorder," and with "some loss," so great



were the numbers of the enemy. He clamours for reinforcements: "If I could speak words to pierce your hearts with the sense of our and your condition, I would!" He must have 2,000 foot to encounter this Army . . . "or you will see Newcastle's Army march up into your bowels." "Ten days" is all the time he can give for reinforcements to arrive. Reinforcements, however, did not come in time, and Lord Willoughby lost both Gainsborough and Lincoln, and within a week after the date of this letter "the hearts of our men have been so deadened that we have lost most of them by running away." Cromwell writes urgently to Cambridge: "It's no longer disputing, but out instantly all you can. Raise all your bands; send them to Huntingdon; get up what volunteers you can; hasten your horses." Send "these letters to Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex without delay." "Without delay" is his constant burden; always ready, and impatient of unreadiness.

About the same time Cromwell was appointed Governor of the Isle of Ely, and Lord Kimbolton, now Earl of Manchester, "Serjeant-Major" of the Associated Counties.

The Parliament's ill fortunes were to a great extent retrieved by the raising of the siege of Gloucester (5th Sept.) by Essex, his one important feat of arms since the capture of Reading, and the saving of the cause in the West Country, where the King was still "exceeding strong." The first battle of Newbury (20th Sept.) comes in here, memorable

chiefly for the death of Falkland, the King's best counsellor, one who loved peace more than victory ; saved by a musket-ball from dying of a broken heart. Cromwell's difficulties did not diminish. However good the cause, his men would not fight without pay, and he would not let war support war. He had spent, he says, in the public service, "between eleven and twelve hundred pounds," and "can do little to help the public. You have had my money : I hope in God I desire to venture my skin."

The next action is Winceby fight. Newcastle was besieging Lord Fairfax in Hull ; but his son Sir Thomas Fairfax ("fiery young Tom," as he was called in his youth, afterwards the Parliament's Lord-General), had got over the Humber to Cromwell, bringing some cavalry with him. Manchester, Cromwell, and Fairfax were united near Horncastle, and ready to strike a blow at the Newark forces. They marched against the enemy "in several bodies, singing psalms," Cromwell leading the van. "His horse was killed under him at the first charge, and fell upon him ; and as he rose up he was knocked down again by the gentleman who charged him." He was soon mounted again, but no second charge was needed ; for the Cavaliers rode away faster than they came, pursued all the way to Horncastle.

Soon after this Lincoln was retaken by Lord Manchester, and henceforward little is heard of Royalism in Lincolnshire ; and on the same day

as the battle of Winceby (11th Oct.) Lord Newcastle raised the siege of Hull, marching away by night, and leaving nine guns behind him.

As at Peterborough, so elsewhere, the Parliament's orders about church furniture, idolatrous images, organs, and painted glass, had to be obeyed. "What is to be done," he writes in 1643, "is no choice of mine." If the Parliament's orders are not obeyed he will "cashier them, the whole troop. I heed God's house as much as any man; but vanities and trumpery give no honour to God, nor idols serve him, neither do painted windows make man more pious."

The damage done to our churches by the fanatical folly of the Puritans is a scandal to their piety as well as their good sense. The carved work was broken down with axes and hammers; the organs which Milton had delighted to hear, and the "storied windows richly dight," in which he had seen no superstition, were shattered for God's glory, as for God's glory they had been set up. Every party has its stupidities. It is easy to cry out upon fanaticism and Vandalism; or, on the other hand, to make light of the destruction of venerable things. Perhaps the best that can be said in extenuation of the crime is that not so much damage was done to the ancient monuments of England by Cromwell and his men, as by those who preceded them under the Tudors.

Cromwell did not disguise his opinion of

Cathedrals and those who served in them. In his capacity as Governor of the Isle of Ely he had to put a stop to the cathedral service. His letter to the clergyman in charge begins with a threat, which is characteristic :

"Mr. HITCH,—Lest the soldiers should in any tumultuary or disorderly way attempt the reformation of the Cathedral Church, I require you to forbear altogether your choir service, so unedifying and offensive ; and this as you shall answer it, if any disorder should arise thereupon."

He proceeds to give some good advice about catechising, reading, expounding, and preaching. As his letter was not obeyed, Oliver himself appeared in church, with his hat on his head, to coerce Mr. Hitch. He first gave his order decently, "as a man under authority;" then, not being listened to, lost patience, as was his wont, and "laying his hand on his sword in a passion," sent Mr. Hitch flying with "Leave off your fooling and come down!" Such a man, with authority, gravity, and on occasion threats and violent words at his command, with soldiers too at his back, and no unwillingness to use them, was likely, right or wrong, to be obeyed.

In the same month we find an indication of the growing power of Cromwell, who was already Lieutenant-General, or second in command to Lord Manchester. He appeared in Parliament with a request that Lord Willoughby's command

in Lincolnshire might be taken from him, and the Earl of Manchester sent there in his place. He was not afraid to strike high to remove a commander who did not do the work well himself, and hindered its being done by others. Cromwell knew that as Lieutenant to Lord Manchester ("a sweet, meek man") he would have his own way, and he was never scrupulous as to the means by which he got the work to be done into the hands that could do it.

In estimating his character, we shall find this habit of thrusting men aside (as if he were to say, "Stand out of the way, and let *me* get at the work") appearing at every turn. It is the instinct of an imperious nature; untiring in patience when things have to be waited for, but sudden and impatient when work has to be done without delay. Lord Manchester himself, Essex and Fairfax too, had to submit to be shouldered aside when their turn came.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *Marston Moor.*

LORD MANCHESTER was sent to govern Lincolnshire, and unite the eastern forces with those of the Fairfaxes in the North, and co-operate with the Scots, who were already marching south. Cromwell had been sent westward with a convoy for the relief of Gloucester, and is heard of in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, losing no chance of fighting by the way. He was back again in Cambridge by March, 1644. Soon afterwards Manchester, or Cromwell under his name, had settled affairs in Lincolnshire, and joined the forces of the Association with those of Fairfax and the Scots besieging York, where the Earl (now Marquess) of Newcastle had shut up the best part of his Army, finding himself unable to make head against the three Armies threatening him in front and rear.

The King's cause had begun to fail. After Waller's defeat in the summer of 1643, if Newcastle had come up from the North, and the King had not wasted time by besieging Gloucester,

Charles might have entered London as a conqueror. This lost opportunity was the turning-point of the war; and the present result of it was the shutting up of Newcastle's Army within the walls of York. Other causes had made it difficult to send help to the King's party in the North, though Newcastle sent many messages for help. A portion of the English forces in Ireland had been sent to England; but these had been cut to pieces by Sir Thomas Fairfax at Nantwich, and all their guns taken. On the same day the Scots crossed the Border. Newark was threatened, and only saved by a brilliant march of Prince Rupert, who undertook the business "before he was ready for it, and thereby performed it," bursting upon the Parliament's forces before they knew he was in the neighbourhood, and scaring them by his boldness into the belief that he had an overpowering force at his back, so that the besiegers, thinking themselves besieged, immediately offered terms of surrender. "A victory," says Clarendon, "as prodigious as any happened throughout the war."

Rupert, as was his wont, made no use of his victory, but hastened back to Shrewsbury and his Welsh government and on to Oxford; and there, and wherever he could find them, gathered together men and war material for his march to the North. Letters kept pouring in upon him; "all the North seems to depend upon this young prince." He started from his head-quarters at Shrewsbury

early in May, took Stockport, and stormed Bolton after three repulses, and sacked it barbarously (28th May); for the soldiers were "very angry" at their check, and killed some 1,500 men, many after they had laid down their arms, and among them "four ministers." The capture of Bolton raised the siege of Lathom House, and gave the gallant Countess of Derby a short respite from her enemies. Rupert then overran all Lancashire in ten days, "killing, destroying, and spoiling almost all he met with." One instance of generosity is recorded of him. It was his custom to burn the house in which he had lodged; but on his way towards York, down the valley of the Wharfe, he slept a night at Denton Hall, the seat of Lord Fairfax, and spared the house from plunder and fire for the sake of a portrait of young William Fairfax, who had fought and fallen in the cause of his mother, the "Queen of Hearts." Thence he marched to Ottley and Boroughbridge, crossed the Ure and the Swale, and encamped his army a few miles north-west of York (1st July). The three armies under Manchester, Fairfax, and Leven drew off to the west, and Rupert entered York on the evening of the 1st of July. The Allied Armies were by this time encamped at Marston Moor, seven miles west of the city of York.

Rupert had obeyed his uncle's "instant order" either to relieve York or come with all speed to join him in the South; but he understood the King's letter as leaving him no choice but to

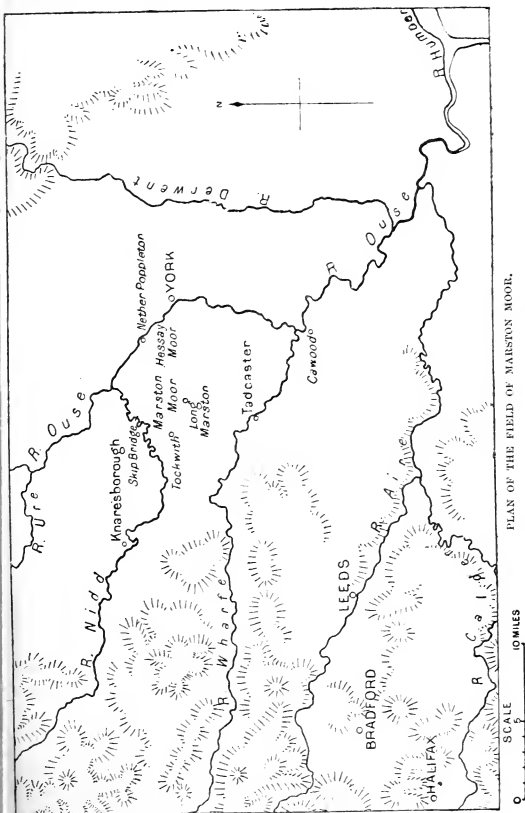


fight the enemy, and especially the Scots. He might have held the balance in Yorkshire without risking all on the chances of a battle. Leaving the united Armies to their dissensions, he might at least have waited a day or two till Newcastle's reinforcements, estimated at 5,000 men, should come up. But to march so far and not fight a battle was not war as he understood it. A day went by, whilst Newcastle remonstrated, and his troops nearly mutinied for pay. Then Rupert marched out of the town alone, followed after an interval by Newcastle, who, "never absent in any battle," "could not shun to fight," and started in his coach-and-six to join the prince's fortunes. Rupert promised him that he would not begin action till early the next morning, Wednesday, the 3rd of July, and advised him to rest. Accordingly the marquess composed himself to sleep in his coach, "close by in the field."

The Allies had held a council of war on the morning of Tuesday, at which the opinion of the Earl of Leven, the Scots' commander, overbore that of the English officers, and a retreat towards the south was ordered. The foot and artillery had already marched some three miles, the cavalry, under David Lesley, Sir Thomas Fairfax, and Cromwell, remaining on the moor to bring up the rear, when a message arrived from Fairfax to say that the Royal Army was coming on from the north in full force. This was about midday. By two o'clock

the Allied Army had returned to their position on Marston Moor.

The nature of the ground and the position of the Armies were as follows: the battle-field was a tract of moorland some two miles across from east to west, sloping gently downwards from south to north, at a gradient of about one inch in a hundred in favour of the Allied force, but hardly enough to be reckoned in the chances of the battle. On a line running nearly west and east are the two villages of Tockwith and Long Marston, the latter a mile and a half to the east of Tockwith, and itself extending south-east for a mile and a half more. A road runs between the two villages, joining at Long Marston the high road, which runs north-east from Wetherby to York. The moor was much cut up with ditches, of which the principal one ran east and west, parallel with the Tockwith and Long Marston road, and at a distance of about a quarter of a mile to the north of it. There were no enclosures on the field, except one square piece, called White Syke Close, surrounded by a ditch. White Syke Close was situated halfway between the two villages, and about half a mile north of the road which joins them. To the south of the long ditch some of the field was covered with standing corn; but near Long Marston was rough ground and furze, and close to Tockwith sand-pits and a rabbit warren. To the north and north-east of the ditch, which was the main feature of the position, the moor was unenclosed



except by the ditches, which carried off its drainage to the Nidd.

The Royal Army was first in position, though Rupert and Newcastle had had hard work to check another mutiny among their unpaid troops. The whole length of the ditch was lined with musketeers, supported by a few guns. Their right rested on a cross dyke, which ran to meet the main ditch from the east end of Tockwith; their left on a similar cross dyke, running from the western end of Long Marston. The main battle of the Cavaliers, some 12,000 strong, under Lord Eythin (better known as General King), was drawn up behind the ditch. The best troops among them were Newcastle's "Whitecoats," a gallant regiment raised by the Marquess himself. They had begged leave to wear their coats of undyed cloth rather than delay, promising that "they themselves would dye it in the enemies' blood." The Whitecoats occupied a position across Moor Lane, a little to the left of the Royalist centre. To their right were the rest of Newcastle's foot, and to the right again Rupert's foot. The cavalry as usual formed the wings, in two equal bodies of 5,000 men each. Rupert commanded the right wing in person, consisting of his own Life Guards, and some English and Irish horse; the left wing was led by Goring, whose second in command was Urry, a thrice-turned renegade, but a good soldier, who introduced a modern improvement of Gustavus Adolphus, and mixed up bodies of musketeers in

the intervals of the troops of horse. There were but twenty-five guns to so large a force, amounting to 22,000. A few of these were planted in a battery on the extreme right of the line; the rest were disposed along the ditch to guard it during the night; for by the time all was ready it seemed too late to fight, and (as we have seen) the Marquess of Newcastle had retired to the security of his coach.

The Parliamentary leaders, however, had not turned back for nothing. Their army, about a thousand stronger than Rupert's, was drawn up a quarter of a mile south of the ditch. The centre was formed of 9,000 Scots, drawn up in solid squares or "*tertias*," the pikemen in the centre, and the musketeers on the flank, as we see them in old prints. To their left were Manchester's brigade, 3,000 English troops from the Associated Counties, commanded by Major-General Lawrence Crawford. The left wing was commanded by Cromwell as Lieutenant-General of horse. It consisted of 2,280 English troopers, 1,440 Scots, under David Lesley, and a few dragoons. The whole cavalry of the left wing amounted to 4,200 men, a little weaker in number than Rupert's wing, to which they were opposed. The right wing was of the same strength as the left, and was commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax. It consisted of 500 good Yorkshire troops, 2,200 recruits, and 1,320 Scots. The front of the two Armies was of the same extent. Fairfax's right rested on Long Marston

village, opposite to Goring's horse; Cromwell's left on Tockwith, around the cross dyke, which there goes to join the main ditch; Leven's artillery, at first posted on the rising ground behind the army, was moved, according to rule, to the front.

There was some cannonading whilst the two armies were getting into position in the early part of the action. Valentine Walton, Cromwell's nephew, had his leg taken off by a cannon-ball, and a "grazing shot" endangered Cromwell's own life, and put his men in some fear for him. He, however, made light of it, and answered merrily, "A miss is as good as a mile."

But it was in no merry mood that Cromwell marched to meet Rupert on Marston Moor. He had lost his eldest son Robert five years ago, and now just before the battle he is described by one who saw him as "looking sad and wearied, for he had had a sad loss. Young Oliver got killed to death not long before, I heard; it was near Knaresborough, and thirty more got killed." He did not love the Scots; and his counsel had been overruled: so that, though it had come round again to fighting, it was under worse conditions than if they had engaged earlier in the day. It appears too that he received a slight wound or burn in his neck, it is said from the pistol of one of his men going off behind him, which in the early part of the engagement made him, as we shall see, slack to begin.

The two armies were drawn up in "battalia"

by five o'clock. Each front was about a mile and a half long from wing to wing. The centre of each army was composed of close-set squares of pikemen and musketeers; the long pikes held erect, standing out a man's height above the soldiers' heads. Unlike our modern battle-fronts, all was steel to the eye; for foot and horse alike wore steel morions or caps, gorget and cuirass. To right and left impatient squadrons of horse closed the line. Here and there banners and pennons drooped in the sultry afternoon air. There was no sun to light up the glittering ranks; the air was thundery and heavy, with occasional showers of rain.

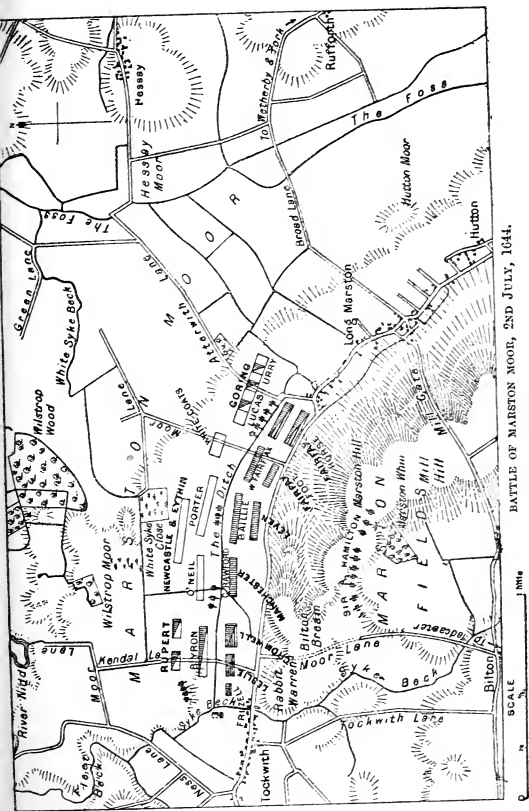
Neither army would make the first move over the ditch which divided them, and run the risk of disordering its ranks. They stood staring at each other over the narrow interval of death for nearly two hours, the Parliament soldiers now and then, to while away the time, "in Marston corn-field, singing psalms," such psalms as religious trust or desire of vengeance inspired. There had been no fighting except the short cannonade and a small affair of dragoons near Tockwith. It was seven o'clock, and only two hours of clear daylight. At last Leven gave the word to advance, and the whole line of the allied armies moved forward through the corn-fields "in brave order, looking like so many thick clouds."

There was no check here. Manchester's infantry, taking advantage of a break in the ditch, crossed

it, and drove away the troops which lined it. The Royal army fell back along its whole line, and the battle re-formed about half a mile from the first position of Leven's army.

On the wings there was different fortune. Rupert for once was not able to burst through and ruin all. The first line of his cavalry was dispersed by the English and Scots, under Cromwell and David Lesley. But the main body of his cavalry under the Prince himself had not engaged. Now occurs a confusion in the accounts of the battle. The advantage was not immediately pushed, and there is much evidence to show that Cromwell held back, and could not at once be brought to charge. We may put aside the accusations of cowardice which his enemies were not slow to bring against him. But he is said to have excused himself on the ground of his wound, and not to have led this charge. The brunt of the attack, it seems, was borne by Lesley and Crawford and their Scotch troopers, who met Rupert, and repelled charge with countercharge. The shock was such that the two bodies of horse (like the heavy cavalry at Balaclava) were locked together motionless at sword's point, "hacking at each other." Then the Royalists gave way, and Manchester's horse, under Cromwell, came up and left the Scots "in their rear," carrying the whole field before them. Side by side with them the English infantry rushed down the easy slope, scattering the Royal foot as fast as Rupert's horse





BATTLE OF MARSTON MOOR, 2ND JULY, 1644.

gave way before the Ironsides, who that day gained their famous name.

The right wing meanwhile, under Sir Thomas Fairfax, was being roughly handled by Newcastle's Whitecoats and Sir William Urry's horse. They got into disorder among the furze, and their charge, headed by Fairfax, failed. They were received by Urry's horse and musketeers, and most of them, raw recruits as they were, were routed, and fled, trampling down their own infantry nearest them. Fairfax's own regiment, however, drove off the field the cavalry which it met, and chased them towards York. All the rest of the right wing was utterly broken; and when Fairfax, leaving his own regiment to ride to York if they would, turned back to look after the rest of his cavalry, he found himself in the midst of the enemy. He took out of his hat the white handkerchief (the Parliamentary colours that day), and rode through the enemy across the field to the other wing; and though he had received two sabre cuts, continued on horseback till the close of the day.

The battle seemed to be lost. The whole of the Parliament's right wing, horse and foot, were flying, and the Royalist horse, and Newcastle's gallant "Whitecoat" infantry, were able to turn to their right and attack the centre of the Parliamentary army. The Scotch infantry held firm at this most critical moment, meeting charge after charge of cavalry with unshaken courage for nearly an hour, as the evening began to close in, darkened by the

thick clouds of smoke which hung in the sullen air, and lightened only by the fire-flashes of the raging conflict, "as if the whole air had become an element of fire." At length they began to break and fly; and Leven, thinking all was lost, rode away from the field towards Wetherby and Leeds.

But late as it was, there was time yet to win a battle. Rupert's cavalry were by this time broken to pieces, his gallant dog "Boy," who followed him into all dangers, was killed, and he himself lay skulking "in a bean-field." Lesley, Crawford, and Cromwell stopped the pursuit, turned rein and rode across the moor to the eastward, and so fell upon the rear of the Royalist main army. The cavalry of the Royalist left, who had ridden down Fairfax's troops, seeing this, turned back also from their pursuit, and a desperate and confused fight ensued as the night closed in, the Royalist and Roundhead cavalry fighting, as it were, in the faces of their own main bodies of infantry, "an enormous hurly-burly of confusion." But the King's cavalry, as they came back to the field, broke before the thunder of Cromwell's victorious horse, and no body of infantry could bear such an onslaught as was now made on the rear of Newcastle's troops. They were "as stubble to our swords," says Cromwell. "We never charged but we routed the enemy," horse and foot alike, driving them along the road to York. One regiment remained unbroken, and memorable for ever

in their constancy. No cavalry or infantry charges could break Newcastle's Whitecoats. They retired sullenly into White Syke Close, and there for an hour, at push of pike, kept the Rebels out, disdaining quarter, slaying and being slain with the dogged hate of Englishmen whose retreat is cut off by distance and darkness, and to whom a fenced position gives an excuse for not surrendering. When the enemy at length forced their way in they found but thirty Whitecoats living, and of those not a few were "saved against their will."

The sun set soon after eight, but the fight and slaughter went on for two hours later, till the whole field was cleared of the enemy. Cromwell was always cruel in the chase; but Fairfax did all he could to stay the slaughter. "Spare the poor deluded countrymen," he cried; and rode all over the field to enforce his orders, forgetful of himself and his wounds, and never more merciful than in victory; the prince of Puritan heroes.

What was left of the Royal army fled to York. It was ten o'clock, and too late to follow; and till late at night wearied and wounded soldiers thronged the Tadcaster road up to Micklegate Bar, which was opened to "none but such as were of the town . . . which made a pitiful cry among them." But more than 4,000 men lay dead on the moor, besides the wounded. The number of prisoners was 1,500, and among the spoil were twenty-five guns, all Rupert had, besides innumerable arms, and many colours,

among them Rupert's own standard, five yards long, of red silk, with a white cross. The victorious General, Leven, had run away, and Manchester, the senior officer in command, rode round the camp before midnight to thank his wearied and hungry heroes for their "exceeding good service."

Cromwell's own account of the battle has not been preserved; but on the 5th he wrote to his brother-in-law, the father of young Valentine Walton:

"To my loving brother the Col. Valentine Walton ; These.

"DEAR SIR,—It's our duty to sympathise in all mercies ; and to praise the Lord together in chastisements or trials, that so we may sorrow together. Truly England and the Church of God hath had a great favour from the Lord in this great victory, such as the like never was since this war began. We never charged . . . but we routed the enemy. . . . God made them as stubble to our swords. We charged their regiments of foot with our horse, and routed all we charged. . . . Give glory, all the glory, to God." He goes on : "Sir, God hath taken away your eldest son by a cannon-shot. . . . Sir, you know my own trials this way, but the Lord supported me with this, that the Lord took him into the happiness we all pant for and live for. There is your precious child full of glory, never to know sin or sorrow any more." He then tells of the poor lad's death, how he bade his men "open to the right and left, that he might see the rogues run ;" and continues, "Truly he was exceedingly beloved in the army of all that knew him. . . . He is a glorious

saint in heaven, wherein you ought exceedingly to rejoice. Let this drink up your sorrow, seeing these are not feigned words to comfort you, but the thing is so real and undoubted a truth." . . . And ends his letter thus, "The Lord be your strength, so prays your truly faithful and loving brother,

"OLIVER CROMWELL."

These are not the "feigned words" of a hypocrite, but a true message of comfort. True also was the feeling which put the Lord's battle in the first lines of the letter, and passed on from that to the private grief, which was its heavier burden.

The result of the battle was the fall, first of York (within a few days) and of Newcastle, which the Scotch Army reduced three months later. The Marquess of Newcastle gave up the cause for lost, and disgusted with Rupert's overbearing behaviour, and not being willing, as he said, to endure the laughter of the Court, left England to retire to "his delightful company, music, or his softer pleasures;" and henceforward disappears from history.

The North of England was lost to the King's party: but hope was reviving in the South, partly from the dissensions and bad generalship of the Parliamentary officers, partly from the skill and vigour shown by Charles himself, rather than from any alterations in the main chances of the war. In May, 1644, Essex and Waller had marched out of London with two armies, amounting in all

to some twenty thousand men. They found the King with about half that number near Oxford, and nearly succeeded in shutting him up there with his whole army (2nd June). He escaped, however, by a brilliant piece of strategy; and with part of his army got away west as far as Worcester, followed by Waller.

Essex meanwhile, without orders from Parliament, marched slowly into the Western Counties to reduce that part of the kingdom to obedience. Parliament remonstrated, but let the obstinate man have his own way. Suddenly Charles, having thus succeeded in separating his enemies, again gave Waller the slip, and rejoined his army at Oxford "within seventeen days after he had left Oxford in that disconsolate condition." Waller came back only to be defeated at Cropredy Bridge, near Banbury (29th June), a defeat which so "broke the heart of his army" that from 8,000 it was wasted to 4,000, and "could never be brought to fight after."

Waller himself went up to London; and the King, being now free to go where he would, hearing too the news of the fatal battle of Marston, and knowing that nothing was to be done in the North, hastened after Essex, whose inglorious campaign was brought to an end in a remote corner of Cornwall by the surrender to the King of six thousand foot, with all their cannon and arms (1st September). The cavalry had slipped through two days before; and Essex himself, with

a few officers, had gone by sea to Plymouth, and thence to London, where he was received, says Clarendon, with no less respect "than they could have showed him if he had not only brought back his own army, but the King himself likewise with him."

Essex's day was done; his lumbering tactics were discredited, and he himself was now looked on coldly as being not sufficiently anxious to fight the war through, and bring it to a successful close. Waller too had lost credit with his party, and those men, who were in their own way for "thorough," had only to deal with the Earl of Manchester, towards whom Cromwell entertained no very friendly feeling. His hour soon came.

Cromwell had observed, not without regret and anger, the miscarriage of the southern campaign. He writes from Sleaford, in Lincolnshire, about the beginning of September, but before the news of Essex's capitulation at Fowey had reached him, "We do with grief of heart resent (*i.e.* feel) the sad condition of your army in the West, and of affairs there. That business has our hearts with it; and truly had we wings we would fly thither." He goes on, glancing at Manchester and his friends: "We have some amongst us much slow in action; if we could all intend our own ends less, and our ease too, our business in this army would go on wheels for expedition!"

There is more in this letter than at first appears. Cromwell was preparing to remove Essex and



Manchester out of his way, and to finish the war himself. What further and higher views he may have had even then it is needless to enquire. He is reported to have said, several years later, "No man climbs so high as he that knows not whither he is going." At any rate Cromwell knew himself to be the ablest general in the field; he must have chafed at the incapacity of his superior officers, and it was not in his nature to let work be spoiled in the doing if it was in his power to do it himself.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *The Independents.*

THE men who began the Great Rebellion were for the most part of moderate opinions in religion and politics. The Long Parliament, as it was first constituted, contained but few Revolutionists; all were members of the Church of England. To none had the idea of a Republic occurred, unless as an Utopian vision. But the King's behaviour in 1640-42, the course of the war, and the divisions of party which it brought with it, gave rise to other counsels. As in 1641 the line had been drawn sharply by the Grand Remonstrance between those who were contented with constitutional safeguards, and those who wished to limit the monarchy, so now a line was to be drawn sharply between those who desired to maintain the old aristocratical constitution, and those who wanted something new.

In 1641 Cromwell had said, "I can tell you, sirs, what I would *not* have if I cannot what I would." Perhaps it had now become more clear to him what he would have, both for the country

and himself. He had worked with the party of Pym and Hampden. They were dead, and the only man of first-rate ability was his friend Sir Harry Vane—

"Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old"—

full of fantastic dreams about the ideal England; but strongly practical in bringing about what was possible of his visions. He and Cromwell, with Oliver St. John to help them, now stood at the head of the thoroughgoing party, whose designs, both in State and Church, went further than could be safely acknowledged.

In the last three years Episcopacy had been abolished, and the services and fabrics of the Church reformed to the full desire of those who but yesterday had been called Nonconformists, Precisians, and Puritans. But with this reform had been introduced a new bondage. The Scots had brought into England their complete Church polity; and if this were to stand, little, if anything, was gained from the old tyranny of the bishops.

"New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large,"

wrote Milton in 1646. Cromwell belonged with all his heart to the party which desired religious liberty—liberty, that is, within evangelical limits; for no Englishman at that time except Jeremy Taylor conceived the possibility of an universal toleration, extending to Papists, Prela-

tists, and unbelievers. Cromwell's opinions were known. He was called "the great Independent." Liberty of conscience was called "Cromwell's chimera." Archbishop Williams called him "a common spokesman for sectaries." He had a chapel behind his house at Huntingdon. He encouraged his soldiers to preach and pray, and whenever it was in his power he laboured to loosen the "secular bonds" imposed by the rigid Presbyterians, who said that "if the devil could effect a toleration, he would think he had made a good exchange of the hierarchy to have a toleration for it," and that "to tolerate all religions is the way to have none."

The other object which the Independent party had in view was political, and of more immediate urgency than the first. It was necessary that the King should be beaten and his party abolished, otherwise the work would have to be done again. Yet many thought he had been beaten enough. He was capable of inspiring a passionate loyalty to his person. He had shown himself to his subjects in all parts of his kingdom, and the more venerable and unfortunate monarchy appeared in him, the less did they desire to drive matters to extremity. As is often the case in England, the beaten cause began to gain in popular estimation. The nobility and landed gentry and their tenantry in all parts of the kingdom were becoming alarmed at the progress of fanaticism and anarchy. They had not taken the sword in order to put all

power into the hands of a Parliamentary Junta and a Council of Officers. Essex, the Lord General, one of the most popular and powerful noblemen in England, made no secret of his disgust and anger at the course things were taking. He would come, he said, and sit in Parliament if he was not to be trusted; but he would not demean himself by "serving in some associated county, *where inferior officers do all.*"

The respect paid by the House of Commons to Essex was in some degree a protest against the levelling theories which were afloat. The Presbyterian majority of the House felt in his solid, if somewhat stupid, honesty a confidence which they could not give to the more brilliant soldiering and more determined statesmanship of those who knew their own minds. Essex had honourably refused to treat with the King without consent of Parliament; but it was beginning to be thought that now was the time to treat with the King, when his affairs were at a low ebb; for (said Manchester) if he were to win the day "he may hang us all;" if he were to lose all, the country was in danger from Cromwell and his free-thinking friends.

Cromwell had used strange language. If he met the King in battle, "he would as soon discharge his pistol upon him as upon any other man." "He loved such-and-such because they loved not lords." "There would never be a good time in England till we had done with lords," or "till the Earl of Manchester were but plain Mr.

Montagu ;" revolutionary words which hinted at the upsetting of all established order.

Cromwell's mind was made up. He was resolved to use the great and sudden military reputation which he had gained in order to crush the King and his party and set up in power the Independents, who alone were able to establish what he conceived to be civil and religious liberty. That his ambition included a conspicuous place for himself we may well believe. Some have credited him even now with the design of the King's death and his own usurpation of the throne, but without sufficient likelihood, though whispers had been heard in the Army of a design to "decoll" the King. The immediate business in hand was the conduct of the war; and to the amendment of this Cromwell set himself with that boldness, perseverance, and subtlety which made all his designs succeed.

He had not long to wait. The King, coming up to Oxford "in great triumph" from his victorious campaign in the West was met by the united forces of the Parliament Army near Newbury. Waller was in command, Essex being ill. Cromwell was present at the battle, and took occasion by what happened there to bring forward in Parliament a grave accusation against Lord Manchester. The battle was fought on Sunday, the 27th of October, 1644. The Parliament forces on the whole had the best of the day, yet the King was allowed to retire unpursued, and even eleven days

later had leisure to fetch off his cannon and throw large supplies into Donnington, or Dennington, Castle, near the field of battle, and to retire as he pleased to Oxford.

There had been a quarrel between Manchester and Cromwell before Newbury fight, Manchester requiring some cavalry service which Cromwell thought excessive. Cromwell had told Manchester "in a discontented manner" that "if he wanted to flay the horse he might have their skins, but no service from them." Each accused the other of hindering a complete victory. There had been a failure somewhere; and a month later Cromwell, as he had done in the case of Lord Willoughby, brought a formal charge against the earl, to the effect "that the said earl hath always been indisposed and backward to engagements and the ending of the war by the sword, and for such a peace to which a victory would be a disadvantage;" in short, that he had played fast and loose with friends and enemies, as if he "thought the King too low and the Parliament too high; especially at Dennington Castle."

The earl retaliated by a countercharge against Cromwell, accusing him of slackness and insubordination. A question of privilege between the Houses caused delay. But the Presbyterian party now felt that Cromwell was their principal enemy, and that he must if possible be got rid of. The papers were filed, but the quarrel was not to be easily set aside.

About the same time another attempt of the Scots' Commissioners to proceed against him as an "incendiary" was laid aside as dangerous, Cromwell being "a gentleman of quick and subtle parts, and one who hath, especially of late, gained no small interest in the House of Commons, nor is wanting of friends in the House of Peers, nor of abilities in himself, to manage his own part or defence to his best advantage."

So stood the dispute; each side waiting to take or make an opportunity. The latter was more in Cromwell's line than the former. His attack upon the Generals "gave great satisfaction" to the Commons; and he was not slow to improve this favourable state of feeling. His plan was as simple as it was audacious. He knew that Essex was not capable of controlling the other commanders, and that consequently there was no general plan of action. He wished to make the Army independent of the Parliament. He had said to Manchester long ago: "If you will stick to honest men you shall have such an army as shall give the law to King and Parliament too." The common feeling of the country, as expressed in pamphlets and petitions, was, that the war had gone on long enough; that the nation was impoverished by taxes; that the Commanders were "making a trade of war," like the generals of the Thirty Years' War, and did not improve advantages or prosecute victories; that the Army ought to be consolidated; and that faithful men ought not to



be kept out of it because of the Covenant. The preachers chimed in to the same tune, urging their congregations to pray that the Parliament might show themselves free from selfish aims, and that God would raise up fit instruments to finish the work. A paper was scattered about the streets in which these words occur: "We have Generals that fight for the King. . . . Greatness without goodness; honour without honesty stinks; away with 't; no more lords, an ye love me; they smell o' the Court."

The same day that this libellous paper was dispersed (9th December) Cromwell made the speech in Parliament which decided his own fortune, and the course of English history. The House was sitting in Grand Committee to consider "the slow proceedings of our armies, and the not prosecuting of advantages." None liked to "break the ice," and there was "a general silence for a good space of time," when Cromwell stood up, and going straight to the point, said:

"It is now a time to speak or for ever hold the tongue. The important occasion now is no less than to save a nation out of a bleeding, nay, almost dying condition, which the long continuance of this war hath already brought it into. So that without a more speedy, vigorous, and effectual prosecution of the war . . . . we shall make the kingdom weary of us, and hate the name of a Parliament.

"For what do the enemy say? nay, what do many say that were friends at the beginning of the Parlia-

ment? Even this, that the Members of both Houses have got great places and commands, and the sword into their hands; and what by interest in Parliament, what by power in the Army, will perpetually continue themselves in grandeur, and not permit the war speedily to end, lest their own power should determine with it. . . . I am far from reflecting on any; I know the worth of those Commanders, Members of both Houses, who are yet in power. but if I may speak my conscience without reflection upon any, I do conceive if the Army be not put into another method, and the war more vigorously prosecuted, the people can bear the war no longer, and will enforce you to a dishonourable peace. But this I would recommend to your prudence, not to insist upon any complaint or oversight of any Commander-in-Chief upon any occasion whatsoever; for as I must acknowledge myself guilty of oversights, so I know they can rarely be avoided in military affairs . . . let us apply ourselves to the remedy, which is most necessary. And I hope we have such true English hearts and zealous affections towards the general weal of our mother country, as no Members of either House will scruple to deny themselves and their own private interests for the public good; nor account it to be a dishonour done to them whatever the Parliament shall resolve upon in this weighty matter."

Other speakers followed. A speech was made by Zouch Tate, Member for Northampton and Chairman of the Committee for Army Reform, in which he said that the Committee had been endeavouring to carry out their orders, but found the condition

of the Army as the physician did the blood of his patient that consulted him about the cure of "a boil on his thumb," when the whole mass of his blood was corrupted. Nothing now would serve for their recovery less than the entire renewing of their constitution. He therefore proposed a Self-denying, *i.e.* a Self-renouncing, Ordinance; which was seconded by Sir H. Vane the younger, and carried by the Commons after a long debate.

Cromwell's plan (for his it was, though, as usual, brought forward under other names) was to exclude from the Army the Commanders whom he and the nation distrusted, by excluding all who were Members of either House of Parliament. It was essentially a military measure; but civil officers were included under the Ordinance. It was little less than an abolition of the House of Lords, and an almost complete change in the administration of civil and military affairs. It is difficult to understand how the House of Commons should have been willing to take such a leap in the dark. They probably felt that nothing but a strong measure would help them. The arguments by which the motion was supported were that thus the divisions in the Army would cease; strict impartiality would be shown in dealing with all; that Parliament (which was just then setting on foot a hopeful negotiation with the King) would be restored to its full numbers, and its Members enabled to attend to their duties; that the Army would be

more obedient to Parliament, and miscarriages in the field more easily dealt with. But the principal arguments seem to have been that all idea of greediness of money or place would be done away with, and that nothing else would so much conduce to the main object—the new modelling of the Army.

There were “many votes” taken, and speeches made. Cromwell himself said the Parliament “had done very wisely in the entrance into the war to engage many Members of their own in the most dangerous parts of it, that the nation might see that they would march with them where the danger most threatened, but that now there was no fear lest a succession of good officers should fail; for besides that it was not good to put so much trust in any arm of flesh, . . . they had officers in their Army who were fit to be generals in any enterprise in Christendom.” He “thought nothing so necessary as to purge and vindicate the Parliament from the partiality towards their own members.” He did not think that such action would break or scatter their armies. “I can speak this for my own soldiers, that they look not upon me, but upon you. . . . They do not idolize me, but look upon the cause they fight for. You may lay upon them what commands you please; they will obey your commands in that cause they fight for.”

The “Self-denying” Ordinance, now passed by the Commons (17th December), ordered that all

Members of either House who held office in the State, or command in the Army, should lay them down, and that no more such should be appointed till the end of the war.

The Lords naturally did not relish their own abolition, and attempted to put the matter by, declaring that they could form no opinion till they had learnt what the "New Model" of the Army was to be. To proceed with the New Model was what its promoters most desired. Accordingly, on the 21st of January, 1645, Sir Thomas Fairfax was appointed Commander-in-Chief, and Philip Skippon, an old soldier, and very popular in the army, Major-General of Foot. Nothing was said about a Lieutenant-General of the Horse, the officer second in command to the General; but all believed, and some hoped, that Oliver Cromwell's name would fill the blank. He, however, was a Member of Parliament, and for the present it could not be done.

Many complications attended the passage of the Ordinance through the Lords, not the least being the opposition of the Scots Commissioners, who saw in it a design to throw off the Solemn League and Covenant, and to make use of them and then put them by; an apprehension which the later conduct of Cromwell does not belie. At length, by alternate boldness and deference, the Commons carried their point. Essex and Manchester, with much dignity and good temper, laid down their commissions; and the next day (2nd

April) the Self-denying Ordinance was passed by both Houses. In its latest form it was not prospective; but there was a tacit understanding that Members of Parliament in general were not to be employed. All offices held by Members since the 20th of November, 1640, were to be laid down. Religion was not forgotten. The arrangements in the Ordinance for the new-modelling of the Army gave an increase of freedom to those who objected to the Presbyterian form of Church government.

Cromwell, in short, by that wonderful art of managing men, of which this is at once the first and the most conspicuous instance, had, whilst carrying out in the most practical manner his immediate object, the reformation of the Army, also put an end to the power of the House of Lords; had put the Presbyterian majority of the Commons into the hands of an Army, the flower of which was devoted to the Independent interest; had removed two of the greatest nobles in the kingdom from a position which they had held with honour and credit, and had set his own nominee in their place, giving him, moreover, not the divided power held by Essex, Manchester, or Waller, but sole and unlimited command over all the forces raised in England. The crowning stroke of policy was to exempt himself from the action of his own measures, and by stepping into the second place to gain the power of the chief command without its encumbrances. All this could not be done but by crooked courses. Cromwell believed that he was

justified in using men as he found them, and playing off one against another. He was fighting the Lord's battles, and might dissemble, like Abraham, Joshua, Samson, David. There is no direct evidence that Cromwell argued thus; but such a theory as this involves less of contradiction than any other. It is impossible to deny that he compassed his ends now and on other occasions by deceiving his adversaries. He probably looked upon his genius for craft, and his knowledge of how to deal with individual persons, as a gift of God, to be used in his service; and he persuaded himself easily, now and to the end of his life, that the argument of "necessity" was valid, and not less easily believed that there was necessity to be found where the interest was concerned which he had at heart.

The New Model Army was organized. Cromwell was behind the scenes; but the work was done by Fairfax at Windsor. Three armies of about 10,000 men each were reduced to one of 22,000, horse and foot. It was to be a regular standing army, not a mixture of Militia and "hastily-raised and ill-trained levies," hard to keep together at all, and harder to keep under discipline. Regiments were disbanded and drafted anew, not without much murmuring, and some mutinying.

A large number of officers had to be nominated to supply the place of those removed by the Ordinance, of those dismissed as not being needed

in the reduced army, and of those who refused to serve in the New Model, or "New Noddle," as the Cavaliers without much wit called it. Fairfax was so much under Cromwell's influence that some complained that the Army was filled with "such officers as were known to him, and to nobody else." There was the more reason for this, as Cromwell had seen more service than Fairfax, and knew the Army better than he.

Sir Thomas Fairfax was now thirty-three years old. He had little learning or experience of business. His tastes were those of a country gentleman. He was a man of perfect honour and simplicity, as gentle as he was brave; a plain soldier, with all that attracts the admiration of the soldier. "I never prospered so well," he said to Cromwell at Horncastle, "as when I fought one to three." He silenced the complaints of weary soldiers by dismounting and marching on foot. At Naseby, when his helmet was struck off his head, he refused to take one offered him by Capt. D'Oyley, saying, "It is well enough, Charles." He killed an ensign, and took a standard with his own hand. The trooper to whom he gave the standard bragged of it as his own deed. D'Oyley "chid the trooper for his boasting and lying" . . . but the general said to him, 'I have honour enough; let him take that honour to himself.' He was too modest to be a great leader in counsel, yet "he was unalterable when his judgment and reason were satisfied." "I have observed him" (says Whitelocke) "at



councils of war, that he hath said little, but hath ordered things expressly contrary to the judgment of all his Council; and in action in the field I have seen him so highly transported that scarce any one durst speak a word to him, and he would seem more like a man distracted and furious, than of his ordinary mildness and so far different temper."

Fairfax was not a great general, but he was an excellent commander, and his slowness of intellect did not prevent him from adopting better counsels than his own. His modesty is no less to be admired than his valour; and it is the union of the power to command, which he had in an eminent degree, with the will to follow wiser counsel than his own, which more than anything else marks him out as one of the most heroic characters of a heroic age. The King called him "the Parliament's new brutish General," and the same epithet is employed by a Royalist writer, who in 1648 describes him as "a gentleman of an irrational and brutish valour, fitter to follow another man's counsel than his own, and obnoxious to Cromwell and the Independent faction for his preferment." In religious opinions he was indeed much inclined to the Presbyterians; but probably, like many others, left Church politics to stronger heads than his own. It was not every one who could be soldier, statesman, and preacher at once, like Cromwell.

While the Self-denying Ordinance and the

New Model were being proceeded with, other events were happening, of which some short account must be given. The "thorough" party were showing their determination by acts of severity. The anger of the King and his party was deliberately courted. Sir John Hotham and his son were executed for entering into negotiations with the Cavaliers at Hull. Cromwell's name appears on two occasions as one of the tellers against the reprieve, and for the death of the Hothams. Archbishop Laud was also beheaded, (10th January) and here too Cromwell gave his vote for severity, or, as he held it, justice. The Westminster Assembly of Divines put forth their directions of public worship, reducing all to Presbyterian form. A treaty was set on foot between the King and the Parliament. Commissioners met at Uxbridge (30th January), and sat for three weeks; but the King was not in earnest, and would yield neither Episcopacy nor Militia; and on the Parliament side the treaty was furthered entirely by the Presbyterians, who thought that they could checkmate Cromwell and the Independents if the King came to terms. Cromwell was so sure of the failure of this treaty that he did not, as far as we know, trouble himself about it.

The King learnt the divisions of his enemies, and tried to balance one party against the other, thus in the end strengthening the hands of his most determined opponents. The new-modelling of the Army went on rapidly. Fairfax was at Windsor

during the month of April, 1645, whilst Waller and Cromwell (the Ordinance not having yet taken effect) were keeping the enemy at arm's length, almost without an army.

The King's design was to combine the armies at Worcester and in the West, and to march with united forces upon London. Cromwell was too busy and useful to be spared. We hear of him in Hampshire and Somersetshire, where great cruelties are reported on both sides; but it is noted that at the muster "no men appeared so full in number, well armed, nor more civil in their carriage, nor less complaints of, than Colonel Cromwell's horse." He writes himself in April, some weeks later, "that since his coming to his regiment" (which was no doubt angry at losing him) "the carriage of it had been very obedient and respectful . . . and they had expressed their hearty sorrow . . . for their late mutinous carriage to the Parliament."

From the West he flew to the Midlands, thence back to Salisbury, whence he wrote urgently to Fairfax for supplies of horse and foot to keep the field against Prince Rupert; then to Windsor (22nd April), to lay down his command, "kiss the General's hand, and take his leave;" but instead of that he was appointed to a fresh service, "notwithstanding the Self-denying Ordinance."

His orders now were to cut off a convoy sent by Rupert to help the King across from Oxford to join him at Worcester. How he discharged this

duty, beating the Royalists with great loss and taking the Queen's standard, "a crown with eighteen *flower-de-luces* and a cross," is told in a letter written from Bletchington, where he took a fortified house without any regular troops by the simple stratagem of summoning, and on refusal crying, "Fall on, fall on, foot," when in fact he had no foot with him. The Governor, Colonel Windebank, who had yielded to ladies' tears, and Cromwell's grim looks and big words, was shot at Oxford for it not long after.

He did not fare so well at Farringdon House, where the Governor, Roger Burgess, though threatened with "the utmost extremity of war," was not to be terrified "with fierce countenance and mere dragoons," though Oliver told him in plain monosyllables, "If God give you into my hands I will not spare a man of you if you put me to a storm." He still held out, and when Cromwell, pressed for time, tried to storm, repulsed him with loss of fourteen men. The new Army was now on its march from Windsor, and Cromwell was appointed to meet Fairfax at the rendezvous at Reading; and to Reading he went (30th April), "leaving Burgess to crow over him."

Towards the end of May Cromwell received orders to take charge of the Isle of Ely, his old government, the King being then advanced as far as the neighbourhood of Leicester. He appears at Cambridge, St. Ives, Huntingdon, Ely, a country which he knew intimately, raising recruits every-

where; so many indeed that some petty villages seemed to have sent almost their whole population.

The Scots army marched south. Fairfax invested Oxford (19th May). Suddenly, taking advantage, it was said, of the absence of Cromwell, who could not be everywhere at once, the King attacked and stormed Leicester (31st May), which was "miserably sacked" by the Royal troops, who spared neither churches nor hospitals; though without so much bloodshed or cruelty as has been commonly said. So "terrible" did this success make the King, compared with the small doings of the new Parliamentary army, that there was talk of fresh negotiations; and when Sir Symonds d'Ewes entered the House of Commons on the morning after the news had come, "I found," he says, "a sad dejectedness in all men's faces for the loss of Leicester."

The King wrote hopefully to his wife: "I may, without being too much sanguine, affirm that since this Rebellion my affairs were never in so fair and hopeful a way." On the other hand, Fairfax, who had been obliged to raise the siege of Oxford and march to meet the Royal army, sent an urgent message to Parliament, in his own name and that of his officers, to beg for leave to appoint Cromwell his Lieutenant-General of horse; that is to say, second in command of the whole army: which grand stroke he announced to Cromwell in a letter dated 11th June, 1645.

Cromwell joined Fairfax near Northampton,

with six hundred horse, only two days after the date of this letter. The Parliament, however, had little but this one army to trust to, and everything looked well for the Royal cause, "when," says Clarendon, "the evil genius of the kingdom in a moment shifted the whole scene."

That "evil genius" was Cromwell. No sooner had he arrived, "received with shouts from Fairfax's men," than all was activity in the camp. Cromwell, with the General's leave, that same evening sent out Ireton with some cavalry to find out where the enemy were. Ireton and his troopers found some of the Royal horse drinking at a house in the village of Naseby (the table at which they sat is still shown), and killed or took them all. From the prisoners they learnt the disposition of the King's army, and on this intelligence Cromwell persuaded (one might almost say ordered) Fairfax to give battle. The King also, finding the enemy was so near, held a council of war, "resting himself in a chair in a low room." Although it was not known that Cromwell and Fairfax had joined forces, the Parliament army were equal in number to the King's troops; and Rupert, remembering Marston Moor, was inclined not to risk a battle. Charles, however, himself decided the question in favour of fighting.

Early the next morning (14th June) the King's army turned back southward, and took up their position on Dust Hill, a low hill in front of Market Harborough. Below them was a wide uneven

valley, called Broad Moor; and beyond this the position of the Parliamentary Army, Mill Hill.

Rupert advanced to make out Fairfax's movements. Fairfax, as it happened, was taking ground to the left, "falling back about one hundred paces from the ledge of the hill," in order to get to windward of his enemy, who had all the points of wind in his advantage. This movement was misinterpreted by Rupert, who never gained wisdom from his long and active experience of war. He reported to his uncle that the enemy were retreating; whereupon the King ordered his army to advance, leaving the favourable position which he had lately occupied.

The two armies were nearly equal in numbers. The King's army came on "in a stately manner," with great magnificence of standards—crimson, white, and blue. Their word was "*Queen Mary*;" that of the Puritans, "*God is our Strength*," "and so," says the chronicler, "indeed He was."

Rupert took command of the right wing, expecting to find Cromwell opposed to him. Ireton, however, was on the Parliament left, Cromwell on the right, opposite to Sir Marmaduke Langdale. As usual, the wings of each army consisted of cavalry. The main body of infantry in each army formed the centre, and was commanded respectively by the King, and by Fairfax, with Skippon as his Major-General. The Cavaliers all had bean-stalks in their hats; most of the Parliamentary army wore a piece of white paper or linen as a mark.

Rupert, at the head of his own regiment, charged straight up hill and over it "with such gallantry, as few in the army ever saw the like;" right over the hill, driving Ireton's horse and foot a mile before him, and fell to plundering in the rear as usual.

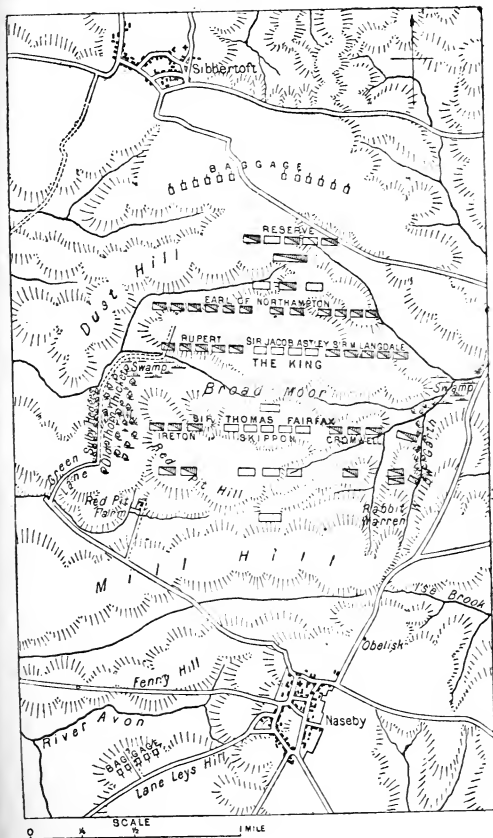
Cromwell, who had been bringing up stragglers from the rear, on the extreme right of the Parliamentary army, met Langdale coming up hill, and broke his force to pieces in spite of uneven ground, thick with furze bushes, and encumbered by a rabbit warren. But the main body of the Parliamentary army could not stand against the advance of the King's array of veteran infantry, coming on irresistibly, as it seemed, through a heavy fire of musketry. They broke, and "mostly all fled." At this moment, however, the reserves came up, and Cromwell's cavalry, having now scattered Langdale to the winds, wheeled round and plunged in upon the left flank and rear of the King's main army.

The tables were thus suddenly turned, and Fairfax's infantry rallied and pushed the enemy back down the hill in confusion, which soon became a rout.

Rupert too had turned, but too late. The King in vain tried to recal his flying troops. His reserve of horse too, which had not fought, were seized with a panic. But his troops could never be rallied when once broken; and though Charles, passionately crying, "One charge more, gentlemen, and we win the day!" would have led them against the victorious



# NASEBY, JUNE 14TH, 1645.



enemy he could neither make his own men obey him nor rally Rupert's horse, who had, "as they thought, acted their parts." At length he allowed himself to be led off the field, leaving behind him his baggage, colours, and guns, and his own carriage and cabinet of letters. The pursuit went on for twelve miles in the long summer day, and the flight even to Newark, thirty miles distant. The King got to Leicester, his army hopelessly ruined, and never saw himself at the head of an army again.

The letter which contains Cromwell's account of this famous day may be read in the British Museum. As usual, he wrote his despatch on the day of the battle, and sent it direct to head-quarters, leaving his superior officer to tell his own story.

His letter ends with the often-quoted words which follow, written, though honestly, not without a politic meaning: "Honest men served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty. I beseech you in the name of God not to discourage them. I wish this action may beget thankfulness and humility in all that are concerned in it. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he fights for."

A few weeks after the battle he wrote thus: "When I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we a company of poor ignorant men to seek how to order our battle (the General having commanded me to order all the horse), I could not, riding alone about my

business, but smile out to God in praises in assurance of victory, because God would by things that are not bring to nought things that are. Of which I had great assurance; and God did it."

Both Fairfax and Cromwell bore themselves gallantly on this day. Fairfax fought all day without a helmet, careless of his life, riding amongst the shot to every part of the field. He led his men to the charge in person with "gallant bravery." One eye-witness after another describes the strange splendour of his demeanour: "His very countenance discovered an emblem of true valour as ever we saw, and had a spirit heightened above the ordinary spirit of man." Another describes him as rather like an angel than a man; and another says that he "never appeared with that alacrity of spirit and that pleasant countenance as then; greatly encouraging his soldiers, and promising by his countenance victory." Cromwell had his morion cut from his head by a cavalier "with whom he exchanged a bullet singly." One of his party picked the helmet up and threw it into his saddle, "which Oliver hastily catching . . . clapped it the wrong way on his head, and so fought with it the rest of the day."

The King wandered about the Welsh border and elsewhere, uncertain whither to go or what to do. He never made head again. The flame of war was quenched by Marston Moor and Naseby, and nothing remained to do but to crush out the embers of it.

Cromwell accompanied Fairfax into the West of England; for there was no enemy left in the Midlands to pursue. The miserable country people had formed themselves into roughly-armed bodies of "clubmen," sometimes as many as four or five thousand together. Their object was to defend their property against plunderers of both sides; but generally with a bias in favour of the "Malignants." At any rate, their pretext of neutrality could not be accepted by Fairfax and his army; and their doggerel rhyme—

"If you offer to plunder our cattle,  
Be assured we will bid you battle,"

was not treated with much respect. Cromwell argued with them, showing an admirable patience in so doing; not till they "let fly" at him giving orders to charge them, and then letting them off as cheaply as possible.

There now remained in the West the army of Lord Goring; a small force under the Prince of Wales and Lord Hopton; the garrison of Bristol and Rupert in command of it; and a few strong places and fortified towns. One of these was Sherborne Castle, held by Sir Lewis Dives, "a little man, but very courageous," who "would not lose his honour to save his life," and told Cromwell's messenger that he deserved to be hanged. Bridgwater had fallen towards the end of July. There was a terrible storm there, preceded by some hot fighting and one pitched battle at Langport

(10th July), in which Goring was beaten by Fairfax with great loss of prisoners, guns, and colours, and chased many miles. The Cavaliers set the town of Langport on fire behind them; "but our men were resolved to pass through fire and water after them, the Lieut.-General himself following them through Langport, though the fire was flaming very hot on both sides of him, there being about twenty houses in all burnt down."

Bristol was taken by Fairfax and Cromwell on the 10th of September. The account written by Cromwell at Fairfax's command, though making little mention of himself, lets us see clearly that the design and the action were alike his own rather than the General's. To spend lives by storming rather than waste time in lengthy siege operations was always Cromwell's plan, and in this instance it was successful; for Rupert did not care to continue the defence after losing one of his principal works, Prior's Hill Fort. He "took his beating gaily, sent a trumpet to the General to desire a treaty for the surrender of the town," and marched out the next day, to the great displeasure of his royal uncle, who had looked to Bristol as the key of his position in the West, and felt that its loss involved much more than the town itself.

Cromwell's whole despatch is full of interest. The following "pious and self-denying expressions" were much noted at the time, and are worthy of being noted now by those who wish to understand something of the mind of Oliver Cromwell.

In that religious or superstitious age it is not wonderful that Cromwell should have been believed to be preserved and helped by supernatural means, a belief shared by Rebels and Royalists, though what was the work of Providence to the one seemed to the other the machinations of the Devil, to whom he had sold himself for a term of years. "All this is none other than the work of God. He must be a very atheist that doth not acknowledge it. Sir, they that have been employed in this service know that faith and prayer obtained this city for you. . . . Presbyterians, Independents, all have here the same spirit of faith and prayer, the same presence and answer; they agree here, have no names of difference; pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere. . . . *And for brethren, in things of the mind, we look for no compulsion, but that of light and reason.*"

Bristol being taken, the success of the western campaign was certain. Work, however, was to be done. The two commanders separated (Oliver always loved a separate command), the General following Goring and Hopton to the West, Cromwell remaining to reduce the strong places east of Bristol. Sir Charles Lloyd, the Governor of Devizes, a "stout gentleman and a good engineer," when summoned to surrender, asked for ten days' respite to send to the King. Cromwell sent back a message that "none were fitter than the Parliament to keep strongholds for the King: let him send out his lady and the gentlewomen;" at which

Sir Charles, losing patience, returned answer, "Win it and wear it." So to it they went, shooting granadoes and playing fiercely with their guns, "insomuch that on Sunday, in the afternoon, by four of the clock, they fell to parley." Cromwell cut this short, gave in his propositions, which were easy enough; if they were not accepted, "then to expect no mercy." Lloyd, seeing the man he had to deal with, probably thought his charge fairly won, changed his mind, and surrendered "on fair terms." This was on the 23rd of September. Cromwell then sat down before Winchester. Here he had more trouble with clubmen, whom he disarmed and sent about their business with the same pity to the "poor silly creatures" which he had shown on a former occasion. The Governor did not await a storm, but surrendered the castle on the 6th of October. The town had been taken almost without fighting a week before.

At Winchester, as at Peterborough and Ely, and wherever the orders of 1641 had taken effect, the monuments of the Cathedral were barbarously mutilated. The Bishop and Cathedral clergy were treated civilly, though the Bishop had refused Cromwell's offer to leave the town before it was attacked, and was told that "he must partake of the same as the others who were with him in the Castle."

Cromwell had time, with all his haste, to do an act of justice and courtesy at once. Hearing that six of his soldiers had imitated the ill-conduct of

the Royal troops at Fowey, and plundered some of the surrendered garrison, he hanged one, and sent the other five to Sir Thomas Glenham, Governor of Oxford, to do with them as he thought fit. Sir Thomas returned them with a civil message.

His next feat of arms was the capture of Basing House, one of the finest houses in England, and a strongly fortified place. The old Marquess of Winchester, its owner, a Roman Catholic, was within the walls, and made a gallant defence. "Loyalty," he said, was the name of the house. The Cavaliers called it "Basting" House, in derision of the vain attempts which it had repulsed, forming as it did, with Dennington, near Newbury, a half-way house between Oxford and the King's power in the West.

Cromwell pursued his usual tactics—summoned, but with no result; then placed his batteries, and "settled the several posts for the storm."

The night before storming, says Hugh Peters, the preacher, who was present, Cromwell "spent much time with God in prayer . . . and seldom fights without some text of Scripture to support him." He would "pray with his officers four or five times in a night before their fighting." "This time he rested upon Psalm cxv. 8: 'They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.'"

Cromwell, like other great men, delighted in the Psalms. He would discourse, not on a single



verse, but on a whole psalm, for an hour together. The first words of the psalm are *Non nobis Domine*, and the whole spirit of it is the nothingness of splendid idolatry against the power of God: "O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield." On the one hand is fierce piety and destructive zeal; on the other, despairing loyalty, and the nobleness of a persecuted faith.

"The old house had stood . . . two hundred or three hundred years, a nest of idolatry; the new house surpassing that in beauty and stateliness, and either of them fit to make an emperor's court. . . . In truth the house stood in its full pride," and so on; like so many other beautiful and ancient houses, doomed to fall, and draw with it the ruin of a great family, because a King was foolish and tyrannical, and a Parliament sour and intractable, reminding peaceful and secure England of the bad times of the Roses two hundred years before.

"In the several rooms, and about the house," proceeds Hugh Peters, "there were slain some seventy-four, and only one poor woman . . . who by her railing provoked our soldiers, then in heat, into a further passion." And "riding to the house on Tuesday night we heard divers crying in vaults for quarter; but our men could neither come to them, nor they to us."

The plunder was immense. "One soldier had six score pieces of gold for his share, another three bags of silver; but he, not keeping his counsel,

lost it all but half-a-crown." "The wheat, household goods, and lumber, with a great part of the other pillage, was sold to the country people, who likewise had a good part of the prey, and carried many cartloads away, the house burnt down and demolished." So we leave it; "nothing but bare walls and chimneys in less than twenty-four hours" of what had been the bravest house in the South of England, a pattern of the desolation which every shire in England could tell of. "*Donec pax redeat terris*" was the motto on the Marquess's own colours which were taken at the storm, and there were few hearts in England that did not answer to that wish.

Cromwell now received orders from Parliament to take Dennington Castle; but Cromwell, like Nelson, knew when to disobey orders, and wrote to Fairfax and to the Speaker the reasons which decided him to leave Dennington alone. Parliament, already beginning to learn the lesson of compliance, ordered that Fairfax and he should have liberty to act as they thought "for the best advantage of the kingdom;" and Cromwell hastened his march westward—to Salisbury, to Exeter, and Crediton (25th October), where he met Fairfax, on through deep snow to Bovey Tracey (January, 1646), on the border of Dartmoor, gleaning prisoners and stores as he went. He and Fairfax remained in the West till all resistance was put down. Lord Hopton, after a fierce fight in Torrington town, and the sur-

render of most of his army, fell back westward, and at last surrendered on favourable terms. He was the most upright and unselfish of the Cavaliers, a man "of an industry not to be tired, and a generosity that was not to be exhausted:" a devoted servant of the Royal house since the day when as a young man, a quarter of a century before, he had ridden out of Prague carrying on a pillion behind him Charles's sister, the Queen of Bohemia.

Fairfax went on with the conquest of the Western Counties, Cromwell serving as his Lieut.-General, till all the Royal garrisons in the West had fallen. Exeter came in 13th April, 1646, after which, in the course of the spring, Fairfax had leisure to undertake the siege of Oxford.

Meanwhile the King's cause was failing in all parts of the kingdom. Rupert and Maurice quarrelled with the King and left England. Montrose, after seeming for a moment to be master of Scotland, was defeated at Philiphaugh. The country was cleared of the enemy. Last of all the commanders in the field, old Sir Jacob Astley surrendered at Stow-in-the-Wold, in Gloucestershire; and sitting on a drum among his conquerors, said to them, "You have now done your work, and may go to play, unless you will fall out amongst yourselves." The King had no army in the field, and but few garrisons. He tried again to negotiate; then, thinking to try a last appeal to the loyalty of his own countrymen,

he suddenly left Oxford in disguise, and after a week of miserable wanderings, missing his way, making for London, and then losing heart, alarmed by travellers and "a drunken man near St. Albans," he appeared in the Scots Army, at Newark, on the 5th May, 1646. From that day began his captivity. He was received with royal honours by Leven, the old Field-Marshal of Stralsund; but given to understand that he was in keeping, and must be content to let Lesley, "the older soldier," give the word to the army.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Presbyterians and Independents.*

IT is probable that these few years were among the happiest of Cromwell's life. He had moments of greater triumph and years of greater dignity later; but he was now in the vigour of his manhood, unbroken by illness, unsoured by opposition; his faith was not clouded by difficulties; he had committed no crime against loyalty or liberty. Let us draw a portrait of him as he was seen by the eyes of friends and enemies then. In height he was under six feet, big and strongly made, good at manly exercise, a bold rider and a lover of horses, his shoulders broad, his head (set a little aside) large, "a vast treasury of natural parts," with sweetness as well as dignity in the open brow and the fall of the thin greyish hair. His eyebrows were thick, with deep cut wrinkles between them, and a large wart over the right eye. Light grey eyes, looking out inscrutably as if they said, "I will know thy thoughts, but thou shalt not know mine;" eyes that could express tenderness, severity, burning zeal, religious exaltation, flaming

human anger. The expression of the mouth and chin is variously given by the portraits; but secrecy, strength of will, and impatience of control, are never absent. His complexion was a source of endless satisfaction to his enemies. 'Ruby Nose,' 'Copper Nose,' and after a while 'Nose Almighty,' are the common nicknames given him. His face is described as tanned leather. We must imagine a coarse red complexion of scorbutic tendency, and a big red nose; a countenance not without its own comeliness, not to be looked on with indifference, as of one fit "to threaten and command." Such to look upon was Oliver Cromwell when, having put an end to the civil war, he stood forth as the foremost man in England, "our chief of men."

On his return to Parliament he was received with great honour, and thanked by the House (23rd April). Already a Bill had been prepared to be submitted to the King, by which, amongst other honours to be conferred, such as a dukedom for Essex, and an earldom for Fairfax, Cromwell was to be made a baron. A more substantial vote gave him the lands of the Marquesses of Worcester and Winchester, situated in Hampshire, where his son Richard was settled as a country gentleman.

The Army was now the chief power in the State, and Cromwell the first man in the Army. If it had been an ordinary army, fighting for an ordinary cause, its commander would have marched to London, dissolved the Parliament, and set him-

self up as Dictator; and this was what Cromwell did in the end. But such a course, had Cromwell wished it, was impossible now. No commander ever held more completely in his hand the wills of his soldiers; but his Army was something of a democracy too. They were fighting for religious liberty. In politics some wished for a Republic, and some for a limited Monarchy under Charles I., or one of his house; but none for a military despotism. They wished to disband and go home; but this was impossible. A great account with the Scots had to be settled, and those who knew Scotland best knew that it was only to be settled by conquest. Ireland was in a flame of rebellion, and was indeed the nearest care. In Parliament all was unsettled. Parties were evenly balanced; for the new elections had brought in upwards of a hundred Independent "Recruiters," cold friends, or declared enemies, to the Covenant and its obligations, to the Scots and Presbyterian Church government, and likely to side with the New Model rather than with the Presbyterian majority if quarrels should arise.

The difficulty was complicated by the presence of the King in the Scottish army. He was a great power in himself. Half the nation had fought for him; more than half believed him to be King by the direct and irrevocable grace of God, and religion and loyalty forbade them to accept a final defeat. The Scots and Cavaliers together might yet beat the Independents and

Presbyterians, or (as Charles hoped) one party might so "extirpate" the other that he "should be really King again." Charles I. had even now a good game to play, but he over-played it; and by balancing party against party, and deceiving all, found himself at length defenceless. His cabinet of letters taken at Naseby had convicted him of double-dealing in every quarter. He would own and disown Parliament; had one voice in public documents and another in council notes; would play fast and loose with Papists and Protestants; intrigue at once with Irish, Dutch, French, and Danes, and would not be bound by any agreements. "After all their fighting," said Cromwell, "they were to be content with a piece of paper."

For the present, then, it was impossible to disband the Army. The Army must remain till Scotland and Ireland were reduced to obedience, and the government of England put on a firm footing, and till then Cromwell must remain (to use his own phrase) as chief constable. To give up his power would have been to give up the cause for which he had fought.

A quarrel at once arose between the Parliament and the Scots about the disposal of the King's person, which extended for many months, and is recorded in hundreds of folio pages. The quarrel began briskly by a declaration that the disposal of the King belonged in England to the Parliament, and a vote passed, in spite of the Presbyterians, (Cromwell and his party "carrying



their business with much privacy and subtlety"), "that this kingdom hath no further use of the continuing of the Scots Army in England" (19th May). The Scots sullenly retired towards the North, plundering and ill-treating the country-people as they went, and taking the King with them. The King did not make matters easy. He would neither declare Episcopacy to be unlawful, nor give the entire control of the Militia to Parliament, nor give up his friends to the vengeance of the victorious party. His consistency did him honour. On these points a wearisome contest dragged on for two years and more, in which the King showed as much ability and patient good temper as tenacity and obstinacy. For the present the conferences came to a head at Newcastle, where the Commissioners from the Scotch and English Parliaments laid before the King the propositions agreed upon between them in London (24th July). Loudon, the Scots Chancellor, told the King plainly that if he would not come to terms "they must settle without him; and if his Majesty lose England by his wilfulness he'll not be permitted to reign in Scotland." The King would not come to terms, and the Newcastle Treaty was numbered with the other unsuccessful attempts to bring him to reason.

Into these debates and parleys Cromwell entered but little. It is possible, however, that he had his own dealings with Charles, then as afterwards, rather with a view to sound the King than

with the hope of effecting much, and it is certain that he watched anxiously and carefully the progress of the negotiations.

There is little under Oliver's hand belonging to this year, 1646. He was applied to as a champion of sectaries by some "honest poor men" of Hapton, in Norfolk, who were being molested for their religion, and in answer begs this may cease: "Sir, this is a quarrelsome age, and the anger seems to me to be the worse where the ground is difference of opinion, which to cure, to hurt men in their names, persons, or estates, will not be found an apt remedy. Sir, it will not repent you to protect those poor men of Hapton from injury and oppression; which that you would is the effect of this letter."

But the year was not uneventful to Cromwell and his family; for on the 15th of June his eldest daughter, "a brave young damsel of twenty-one," was married to Commissary General Henry Ireton, her father's close friend, and one of the most upright and noble-hearted men of his party, Oliver's "second self."

It is to his daughter Bridget Ireton that the following words are written, words which cannot be quoted too often, full of eloquent simplicity, such as could only have come from a man whose heart was full of the things of which he writes:

"LONDON, 25th October, 1646.

"DEAR DAUGHTER,—I write not to thy husband; partly to avoid trouble, for one line of mine begets

many of his, which I doubt makes him sit up too late ; partly because I am myself indisposed at this time, having some other considerations.

“Your friends at Ely are well. Your Sister Claypole is, I trust in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind ; bemoaning it, she seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. And thus to be a seeker is to be of the best sect next to a finder ; and such an one shall every faithful, humble seeker be at the end. Happy seeker, happy finder ! Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity, and badness ? Who ever tasted that graciousness of His, and could go less in desire—less than pressing after full enjoyment ?

“Dear heart, press on ; let not husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. I hope he will be an occasion to inflame them. That which is best worthy of love in thy husband is that of the image of Christ he bears. Look on that, and love it best, and all the rest for that. I pray for thee and him ; do so for me.

“My service and dear affections to the General and Generaless. I hear she is very kind to thee ; it adds to all other obligations.

“I am, thy dear Father,

“OLIVER CROMWELL.”

The “Sister Claypole” is his second daughter Elizabeth, who somewhere about the same date was married to Henry Claypole, the ancestress of a long line of Cromwell’s descendants. Her father writes of her to her mother five years later (12th

April, 1651): "Mind poor Betty of the Lord's great mercy. Oh, I desire her not only to seek the Lord in her necessity, but in deed and in truth to turn to the Lord; and to keep close to him, and to take heed of a departing heart, and of being cozened with worldly vanities and worldly company, which I doubt she is too subject to!" She died a month before her father, to his great grief; her father's "darling," "his greatest joy."

The year 1647 opened with the completion of the arrangements with the Scots. If there had been a Cromwell among them they would have kept the King, Royalists as they were, and dared the English Army. As it was their remonstrances and declarations issued in nothing practical but their payment of £200,000 of arrears, and the delivery of the King to the Parliament's Commissioners. Charles was met by Fairfax at Nottingham, and conducted to his own house of Holdenby or Holmby, near Northampton (15th February). It was noted that Fairfax kissed the King's hand, while Cromwell and Ireton stood aloof.

The Presbyterians seemed to have won the day; but they were to enter a strange scene of politics, out of which Cromwell, "loving to fish in troubled waters," brought that series of events which issued in the death of the King and his own victorious exaltation. The Presbyterians had almost finished their work, if ordinances and petitions could do it. They had issued instructions for the ordination of ministers, the trial and eject-

ment of "scandalous" or unlearned ministers, had forbidden unauthorized persons to preach (such as were Oliver's troopers, and indeed Oliver himself), and had got the Presbyterian Church system here and there into working order. But for the Army the Presbyterians would have had their way, and the Church of England would have been reduced to the same form as that of Scotland. Indeed, in point of law the Presbyterian establishment was the authorized Church of England until the Restoration. The Independents had no quarrel with the Presbyterian doctrine, nor did they object altogether to the Presbyterian discipline. Divided as they were into many sects, they wished for that liberty to themselves which they were willing to give to others. "For brethren," said Cromwell, "in things of the mind we look for no compulsion, but that of light and reason." These noble words were gall and wormwood to the rigid Presbyterian. To him "*compelle intrare*" was as sacred a command as to Bonner and Gardiner. The Presbyterians would have imposed the Covenant and the Scotch doctrine and discipline on every man, woman, and child in the three kingdoms. The Independents would have maintained the Covenant by voluntary subscription, and would have tolerated all evangelical sects; but they would have silenced Episcopalians, and punished Papists and unbelievers.

The Army was now the object of hatred and fear to the Presbyterian party, and the struggle

clears itself, as such struggles do, until Army and Parliament are shown to be opposing powers, one of which must surrender to the other. The contest was not finally closed till the day when Cromwell locked the door of the House of Commons, and carried away the key in his pocket. He writes now (11th March): "There want not in all places men who have so much malice against the Army as besots them. . . . Never were the spirits of men more embittered than now. Surely the Devil hath but a short time."

Whatever we may think of Cromwell's sincerity and truthfulness, there is no doubt that he was both feared and respected by the party opposed to him, and that the opinion of his "subtilty," hypocrisy, and "Machiavelianism" was no new thing, nor only the imagination of "baffled enemies of Cromwell." "By conscientious resolution," says Carlyle, "by sagacity and silent wariness and promptitude, by religious valour and veracity," Cromwell prevailed. Doubtless it was so; but also by caution and observance of occasion, by using men so far and in such a way as he needed them, by letting fools and knaves ruin themselves, by keeping his own counsel from all the world, by pursuing his own course, and using all the turns of fortune for his own purposes, did this great knower of men achieve greatness. But men are not loved for such qualities; and Cromwell's friends were few, though those who could love him loved him warmly.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *The Agitators.*

THE war being over, the question of disbanding arose. The difficulties in the way were these: first, arrears of pay; secondly, the principle of toleration, which the Army were not disposed to give up; thirdly, the "settlement of the kingdom," including the disposal of the King's person and authority, in which the Army intended to have a voice. They were over twenty thousand strong. Less than half this number would suffice to conquer Ireland. A small force would keep the peace in England. There was for the present no apprehension of a war with Scotland. And as for foreign politics, though the Duke of Lorraine had wept to hear of Naseby, and Piccolomini had "fallen into a great passion," blaming Rupert's rashness on that fatal day; yet France, Spain, Sweden, and Germany were too busy with the dregs of the Thirty Years' War, and too much exhausted in all their resources, to take much interest in English politics; and for the like cause Englishmen had little leisure to attend to Conti-

mental affairs. To disband the Army seemed to be the natural course of events. Officers of the old Army who had no love for the new, such as Waller, Massey (who afterwards fought for Charles II. at Worcester), Poyntz, and others, pressed on the question of disbanding, and the Presbyterians in Parliament backed them up. Cromwell himself (in his dissembling) is said to have protested in the House, "with his hand on his breast, in the presence of Almighty God, before whom he stood, that he knew the Army would disband and lay down their arms at their door whensoever they should command them." Ireland meanwhile was to be relieved (or conquered) by a force of twelve thousand men, who were to be volunteers; it being supposed that whole regiments would volunteer for the service; and to make the service more popular, Major-General Philip Skippon, the old soldier of Gustavus, the brave defender of London, the soldiers' friend, was appointed Field-Marshal, to command the Army for Ireland. But no army for Ireland could be got. There was a rebellious spirit in the Army not to be tamed by public fasts and long sermons at Westminster, and other means must be used to get the Army disbanded.

The Army had organized itself into a body which could act for itself. With the consent or connivance of their officers, and not improbably by the suggestion of Cromwell and Ireton, the common soldiers had formed themselves into a



kind of democracy. The officers had their "Council." To assist and work alongside of this the soldiers elected delegates, whom they called *Adjutors*, to consult with the officers, or act for themselves as occasion might serve. The name was soon corrupted into "*Agitators*," and by that name they are commonly known, both then and now.

The cry of the Army was, No disbanding without payment of arrears; their old officers to go to Ireland; indemnity for all actions during the war; and that there should be for the future no "pressing" of soldiers in England. Unfortunately for themselves the Presbyterian majority in the House of Commons, instead of voting the whole sum needed, wished the Army to be content with six weeks' pay, or about 14 per cent. of what they demanded as their due. The resources of the country had been heavily drawn upon by the great payment made to the Scots. Money was scarce; but if the Presbyterian leaders had been wise they would have put the Army in the wrong by paying the full arrears demanded. Cerberus may sometimes be escaped by a sop.

Finding that their demands were not likely to be listened to, the Army raised their tone. They knew that the power was in their own hands, and probably felt sure that Cromwell would stand by them. They asked to be informed about the method of disbanding, about the "Settlement of the Kingdom," and other matters of importance.

The Commons took offence at the intrusion ; and an unfortunate resolution, proposed by Denzil Hollis, formerly one of the "Five Members," and now a bitter enemy of Cromwell, denounced those who held such language as "*enemies*" (30th March). The word was caught up by the Army, and for many months was a weapon in their hands, and not without effect, as the sequel shows.

The Army were encamped, under Fairfax, at Saffron Walden, in Essex, within the Association, which Parliament had declared forbidden ground ; but to vote, and to have its vote disregarded, was soon to be a common experience of this Parliament. Deputations were sent to the Army to bid them volunteer or disband, but without effect. They complained of being misunderstood, cheated of pay, traduced as traitors and "*enemies*." The officers said they were willing to go to Ireland under their old commanders, Skippon and Massey ; but the cries were for "a Fairfax, a Cromwell." The whole Army would go if they went : "all ! all ! Fairfax and Cromwell, and we all go." A dozen or so of the officers volunteered to serve in Ireland ; but the men would not follow their example. Honest Fairfax was offended. Officers, he said, should promote the service if they would not go themselves.

This was in the middle of April. No progress could be made, though two hundred officers at once were examined before the Army Committee, which sat at Derby House, in London.

On the 30th of April a letter was presented in Parliament by Skippon, signed by three troopers, Allen, Sexby, and Sheppard, Agitators on behalf of several regiments of horse. This produced a great stir; for the soldiers had not only asked what was owing to them as soldiers, but desired that Parliament would take steps for the Settlement of the Kingdom, a request which Parliament could not but consider a breach of privilege.

The result of this affair was that the House of Commons, seeing no other way out of the difficulty, sent down Skippon, Cromwell, Ireton, and Fleetwood on the same day to make terms with the Army. Cromwell, it was well known, sympathized with the Army. He was suspected of having set the system of Agitators on foot. He had said to Ludlow, "These men (the Presbyterians) will never leave (off) till the Army pull them out by the ears." But it appears probable that he had tried to calm the minds of the soldiery, and discouraged agitation. And we need not suppose that he contrived by secret machinations to get himself put on the list of Commissioners. A man in his position has only to wait, and what he wishes for will come to him of itself. Nothing could be settled without him. It is of no use to ignore power; for it asserts itself, and upsets all calculations. Probably, however, he had to do with the appointment of Ireton, his son-in-law, and Charles Fleetwood, his close friend.

The Commissioners went to the camp at Saffron

Walden with fair promises and enquiries about "distempers" in the Army (7th May). The officers caught up the word "distempers." They cried, "They knew of no 'distempers,' but of grievances. If that were meant they could speak." They desired, however, time to consult with the body of the soldiers.

The Army were not disposed to be conciliatory, and they must have heard just at this very time that the House of Commons had issued an Ordinance to put the conduct of the Militia of London in the hands of Presbyterians. It is the first clear note of a discord between the City and the Army, which grew very loud in the course of a few months.

Cromwell and his companions spent a fortnight at Saffron Walden, but Cromwell's letters from the camp say little. He and his fellow-Commissioners speak of the affair as being of the greatest difficulty, "in comparison whereof nothing that ever yet we undertook was, at least to our apprehension, equal." "We must acknowledge," they say, "we found the Army under a deep sense of some sufferings, and the common soldiers much unsettled;" speak of their instructions being "to do their best to keep the soldiers in order;" and, in short, gave it to be understood that they thought the soldiers had a grievance.

The Commons, bent upon disbanding, passed such votes as they thought would content the Army, or ought to do so. The Army was to be

disbanded with the thanks of the House and eight weeks' pay, with more to come in time. A committee of Lords and Commons were ordered to go down to Saffron Walden "to see the Army disbanded." They arrived, but did not find all settled. The discontents of the Army rose ever higher. Fairfax had a difficult task to hold the scale even, and could not prevent a meeting of officers and Adjutors at Bury St. Edmunds, who agreed that a general 'Rendezvous' of the Army was necessary, and told the General so plainly. This rendezvous took place at Newmarket on the 4th of June.

Parliament had expected no such outbreak. No sooner, however, did they hear of the meeting at Bury than they hastened to raze out of their books the vote of the 30th of March which had given so much offence to the Army; but not in time to prevent the Army's votes, on the 4th and 5th June. Fairfax was received by the Army with loud shouts. The soldiers drew up a "Solemn Engagement of the Army," which Cromwell is said to have been the first to sign, in which they declared that right had not been done them, and pledged themselves not to disband until grievances were redressed and security given.

Parliament, in the vote of the 3rd of June, had "expected obedience to the disbanding;" but their policy went no further than to give sops to Cerberus, and their answer to this menacing step on the part of the Army was to enlarge their vote of

indemnity of a few days previous. "And here," says Whitelocke, "the Parliament began to surrender themselves and their power into the hands of their own Army."

The Army had won the game by their move to the Rendezvous at Newmarket. The plan of the Rendezvous is attributed to Cromwell, whose action here, as elsewhere, is very dark. On the one hand, he is said to have been menaced by the extreme malcontents in the Army; on the other hand, to have escaped a design on the part of Parliament to arrest him only by leaving London secretly early in the morning of the 2nd of June, to throw himself into the arms of the soldiers, henceforward their acknowledged leader. That a leader was needed was plain enough. Though the greatest deference was paid to Fairfax personally, and though every man in the Army would have laid down his life for him in the field, no account was taken of his wishes or even commands in any matters but those of mere discipline. Fairfax was now to be laid aside. It would be better for his fame if the story of the next eighteen months could be forgotten.

On the same day on which Cromwell left London, Joyce, a cornet in Hollis's horse, starting from Oxford with five hundred troopers, came to Holmby House, and after a half-jocular parley with the King carried him off to the Army's quarters at Newmarket. Fairfax "professed that neither he nor most of the Army had anything to

do with Joyce's deed," and Fairfax's word needs no further authority to support it.

But it is difficult to believe that Cromwell was not privy to it. He may not have given Joyce his instructions, or have known exactly what he was going to do. He is said to have protested in the name of God "his ignorance and innocence in that business, both to the King and Parliament, adding an execration upon his wife and children to his protestation. Yet" (continues the writer) "Joyce is so free from punishment that he is since preferred." The same authority tells an anecdote which has some air of probability, that "when Joyce, giving Cromwell an account of that action, told him he had now the King in his power, 'Well,' replied Cromwell, 'I have then the Parliament in my pocket.'"

Parliament did not behave with dignity. They sent down Commissioners to the Army; allowed themselves to be mobbed "very rudely" by a crowd of old soldiers, "Reformadoes," who blocked up the doors for two hours, and would not go away till their arrears had been paid; met on Sunday, a rare occurrence; voted Acts of Indemnity; and in general demeaned themselves as men who had lost the appearance as well as the reality of power.

The Army received the new Commissioners on Triploe Heath, between Newmarket and Bury (10th June). There, in spite of the influence of Skippon, the Army unanimously declared itself unsatisfied

by the votes of Parliament; cried for "justice! justice!" and not only refused to disband without full satisfaction, but marched on to St. Albans the same day. That this march was ordered by Cromwell—for when he was there Fairfax rather obeyed than commanded—there can be no doubt. He himself, it is believed, drew up the "Army Manifesto" in the form of a letter to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London, which bears that date.

The "Army Manifesto" of the 10th of June, 1647, should be studied by all who wish to understand the events of these times. The demands of the Army are moderate and reasonable; "beyond which we shall not go." As Englishmen, they desire the settlement of the affairs of England; as soldiers, they require satisfaction of lawful demands, and justice upon those who have traduced them; as Christians, they ask for freedom of conscience. These things, "beyond which they will not go," they are determined to have; and nothing can be more like Cromwell than the threat with which the letter concludes—like the summons to a besieged town, repeated twice, that there may be no mistake about it—that the Parliament may look to be turned out, and the City to be plundered and ruined, if any resistance is made to the just demands of the Army.

Cromwell was now in the saddle. He knew his men, and knew that he might threaten without fear of having to carry his threats into action.



Some show of resistance was made. The Self-denying Ordinance was voted again, as if there were some virtue in it. The trained-bands were called out and guards set, and the shops were shut for "a day or two;" but the City answered peaceably, and Lords and Commons concurred with them in sending further messages to the Army to know "what the desires of the Army were, and what would give them satisfaction." On the 14th of June the Army sent from St. Albans their definite demands. These were, for the present, that eleven Members of Parliament, the most active heads of the Presbyterian party, should be proceeded against for hindering the affairs of Ireland, intriguing against the Army, and obstructing justice; that the House should be "purged" of such Members as ought not to sit there; that preparations for a new general Election should be made; that liberty of conscience should be established, justice done on grand delinquents, and amnesty granted to others.

Meanwhile the City, strong in the Presbyterian interest, pressed the Parliament with demands for the upholding of the Covenant and treating with the King.

The House of Commons, which should have ruled both factions, obeyed each in turn, voting and rescinding its votes, shifting and veering as the wind blew from Guildhall or from St. Albans. Angry letters came from the Army threatening to vindicate freedom of Parliament in an extraor-

dinary way. Peremptory petitions came in from City apprentices, watermen, militiamen, members of a new anti-Army Association, backed by the Corporation and Presbyterian citizens of London. So things went on for several weeks. At last the contempt for Parliament ran to such a height that a mob of the City apprentices, "and many other rude boys and mean fellows," invaded Westminster in a riotous manner, forced their way into the House "with their hats on," hustled the Members, and would not go away till the City Militia had again been put into the hands of a Presbyterian committee, and the Eleven Members recalled to their place in Parliament (26th July). This was followed by an order to put the City into a posture of defence, and a muster of Militia and volunteers was held in St. James's Fields. It was plain that this comedy must have an end. The Army broke up their quarters and marched rapidly upon London, appearing, on the 3rd of August, 20,000 strong, on Hounslow Heath. This move broke up the Parliament. The Independent minority and others, who saw that the game was up, left Westminster, and proceeded to Fairfax's quarters—a hundred Commons, with their Speaker, and fourteen Lords. Fairfax occupied without resistance all the outworks of the town, from Hammer-smith and Southwark to Gravesend and Tilbury; planted guns at London Bridge to frighten, not to hurt, the citizens, and so marched in peacefully to Westminster with a guard of some thousands of

horse and foot, Cromwell bringing up the rear, his soldiers wearing laurel boughs in their hats.

Fairfax received the thanks of Parliament; the Eleven Members disappeared, some into France, some to the Tower; and on the next day "the Houses sat not, but the General, the Army, horse and foot, and a gallant train of artillery, marched through the City of London, yet in so civil and orderly a manner, that not the least offence or prejudice was offered by them to any man, either in words, action, or gestures, as they marched."

So ended for the present the contest of authority between Army and Parliament. The obnoxious Members of both Houses being removed, what remained chiefly consisted of Independents, ready at present to carry out the wishes of the Army; but not such a Constituent Assembly as could, with good prospect of success, take upon themselves the office of fashioning anew the constitution of England.

For no less than this was required. The King's force was beaten down, but his spirit was not broken; nor was he likely to come to any reasonable terms as long as Scots, Independents, and Presbyterians were quarrelling over him.

The Army had drawn up "large proposals," which contained the grounds of a Settlement; but one of their demands was that the present Parliament should terminate within a year at most; another that all penalties for non-attendance at church should be taken off, and that the Covenant should not be imposed on any against their will.

Thus the Army by right of force opposed itself to Royalism, beaten in the field, but possessed of the loyalty of half the nation; to the Presbyterian party and their Church system, which had the good will of the middle classes, and the religious world in general; to the Scots and their Covenant; to law and order as represented by maces and woolsacks, coifs and gowns, and all the parade of respectability which is always so great a power in England.

To set against this was nothing but naked force; no Government, but an Army, and that Army held together by the hand, and directed by the spirit, of one man—Oliver Cromwell.

We shall see how this great composer of differences settled his scores with the Presbyterians, the Scots, the Parliament, and the Army itself. For the present he kept himself, as was his wont, in the background, working incessantly; attending to affairs in Ireland, Wales, Hull, and elsewhere; travelling to the Isle of Wight, where his friend Robert Hammond was just now made Governor; writing in a strain of somewhat peremptory humility to the Lord-General, excusing himself for "not attendance" on Fairfax on the ground of his duties in the House, "where," he says, "it's very necessary for me to be;" and, above all, hovering about the King at Oatlands and Hampton Court, admitted by Charles to some degree of familiarity, and learning by intercourse with him what could and what could not be done to come to an agreement.

Cromwell and Ireton indeed carried their dealings with the King so far that they were accused of betraying the cause. None, it was said, found better entertainment with them than the King's most malignant counsellors, nor received more of Cromwell's "gracious nods and courtly embraces." They were believed to have shown the King a copy of the Army Proposals before they were sent in, and to have altered some points at his suggestion; to have poisoned the King's mind against the Presbyterians; to have promised him his restoration to full dignity; and as such stories always take definite form, it was rumoured that Cromwell aimed at being Mayor of the Palace; that he had bargained for the earldom of Essex, and a garter for himself, and a peerage and the government of Ireland for Ireton. King Charles was to keep his court and his chaplains, Church and State were to be settled on the plan of a limited Monarchy, and there was to be an amnesty for those who had fought and bled for the King.

It is certain that Cromwell and Ireton had a difficult game to play, and that they held one language with the King, and another with the Agitators, whom Cromwell already began to regard as enemies. Sir John Berkley, a servant of the King, who gives a clear account of what came to his knowledge in the course of this year, tells us that Cromwell said to him, "They thought no men could enjoy their lives and estates quietly without the King had his rights;" that after seeing the King's interview

with his children at Maidenhead "he wept plentifully," saying it was "the tenderest sight that ever his eyes beheld," and that he thought the King the uprightest and most conscientious man of his three kingdoms, and wished "that God would be pleased to look upon him according to the sincerity of his heart towards his Majesty."

Messages, says Berkley, passed daily between the King, and Cromwell, and Ireton, "who had enough to do with the Parliament and commander of the Army, the one standing with Presbyterians, the other with Levellers, and both equally jealous that Cromwell and Ireton had made a private compact and bargain with the King;" so much so, that the more they urged the Army Council to come to terms with the King the more it was rejected, and they lost thus the confidence both of the Army and of their friends in the House. And not long after the extreme party in the Army told Cromwell and Ireton that they would hear of no such agreement, but would rather divide the Army, and fight it out. Cromwell therefore changed his tone, "professed himself convinced and penitent, and desired their prayers that God would be pleased to forgive him his self-seeking."

It is impossible to assert that all this is without foundation; in fact, much of it has the air of truth; but all that is certain is that Cromwell tried to make terms with Charles, and failed.

He had to balance many interests, and see what result could be arrived at. He may well

have felt that a dictator could alone settle all their opposing claims. For the present he was working for himself and the Army, not for the Parliament, old or new; for it becomes plainer as we go on that Oliver had no faith in Parliaments. "It was a miserable thing," he said to Ludlow, in 1646, about the time of Essex's death, "to serve a Parliament, to whom, let a man be never so faithful, if one pragmatistical fellow amongst them rise up and asperse him, he shall never wipe it off. Whereas," said he, "when one serves under a General, he may do as much good service, and yet be free from all blame and envy." He believed to the end of his life that government could not be well conducted by Parliament, but must be put into the hands of men who understood their business and knew the meaning of responsibility. Great indeed was Cromwell's contempt for the Parliament then sitting; not that he relaxed his attendance at Westminster. He was always in his place, doing his best to allay discontents by payment of arrears, by gentle treatment of delinquents, by urging on a *modus vivendi* between Churchmen and Dissenters. Cromwell thought it worth while never to lose a chance, whether he believed or not that good would come of it. His left hand did not know what his right hand was doing; hence some called him a hypocrite and double-dealer, and no doubt during all this time he was in some sense a double-dealer. The chances which he thought it

worth while to try now were those of the Parliament and the King. If they failed, as he knew was probable, he had the Army to fall back upon as the instrument of his unalterable determination to restore to England settled government, based upon religious freedom.

A story is current which, though it has nothing in itself improbable, and rests on respectable authority, yet bears something of an air of romance; but which, if it is true, gives a reason for the sudden breaking off of relations with the King. Cromwell is said to have told Lord Orrery that during their negotiations with the King, he and Ireton received intelligence "that their doom was decreed." Their informant "could not possibly tell what it was, but we might find it out if we could intercept a letter from the King to the Queen, wherein he declared what he would do. The letter," he said, "was sewed up in the skirt of a saddle, and the bearer of it would come with the saddle upon his head about ten o'clock that night to the Blue Boar Inn, in Holborn." Accordingly Cromwell and Ireton rode from Windsor, and betook themselves, disguised as troopers, to the Blue Boar. They called for cans of beer, and sat drinking till ten. In comes the man with the saddle. They tell him they "were there to search all that went in and out there," take his saddle from him into the stall where they had been drinking, unrip it, and so find the King's letter. "Upon this," added Cromwell, "we took horse and went to



Windsor; and finding we were not likely to have any tolerable terms from the King, we immediately from that time forward resolved his ruin."

Whether this story be true or not, it is borne out by another story of an intercepted letter from Charles to the Queen, in which he told her "she might be entirely easy as to whatever concessions he should make them; for that he should know in due time how to deal with the rogues, who, instead of a silken garter, should be fitted with a hempen cord."

The King was "more shifty every day." He had conceived hopes of foreign succour now that the Thirty Years' War was coming to a close. He was intriguing with Ormond for help from Ireland, with the Scots for a flight into that country, with Lord Capel for a rising of the Royalists. He refused to commit himself to any party, and so lost his chance with all. He is said to have blurted out in his incautious manner to Ireton, "I shall play my game as well as I can;" to which Ireton replied, "If your Majesty have a game to play, you must give us also the liberty to play ours."

At the same time the Army remained uneasy. An army with no fighting to do, yet maintained on a war footing, and with work before it (for there was the certainty of war in Ireland, and some likelihood of a brush with the Scots, even if affairs went smoothly in England) is sure to be full of discontents and anxieties. Cromwell had

set the Agitators at work, and they worked faster than he had meant. As we have seen, they suspected Cromwell of tampering with their interests for his own profit. They began also to speak more fiercely about the King, and to complain openly in the Army Council "both of the King and the Malignants about him, saying that since the King had rejected their Proposals, they were now to consult their own safety and the public good; and being convinced that Monarchy was inconsistent with the prosperity of the nation, they resolved to use their endeavours to reduce the Government of England to the form of a Commonwealth."

Matters had gone so far that the King had agreed to a basis of negotiations which would have satisfied all moderate men. He had, in fact, accepted Cromwell's proposals, and Cromwell had engaged for the Army, so far as that was possible, that he should be restored to his Royal rights. But when the Army began to talk of justice on Grand Delinquents and a government in the form of a Commonwealth, and when the King held in one hand the silken garter, and in the other the hempen rope, Cromwell and Ireton began to think they had gone too far. They did not, however, give up the hope of a settlement.

Although the Agitators used more and more violent language, and said openly that they would not leave the settlement of the kingdom to "him that intended their bondage and brought a cruel

war upon them," Parliament, by the 1st November, completed their propositions for the King's restoration, which were to be finally sent to the King at Hampton Court. But before this could be done, the King had left his lodging there and disappeared.

It would seem that some of the Agitators, or the more violent and mutinous among the soldiers, had formed a design against the King's life, or at least had intended, like Joyce, to get possession of his person and "take him out of Cromwell's hands." Cromwell had intelligence of this as of everything, and wrote to Colonel Whalley, his cousin, who had charge of the King, to "have a care of his guards." This letter Whalley had shown the King. On the evening of Thursday, the 11th of November, the King did not come out of his room as usual between five and six. At eight o'clock Whalley went round by the back way, and found the King's cloak "on the midst of the floor next his bedchamber." "He left some letters upon the table in his withdrawing-room of his own handwriting," says Cromwell, who was at Hampton Court at twelve o'clock the same night. One of these letters, addressed to the Houses of Parliament, is "that well-known one where he speaks 'in very Royal style, still every inch a King,' of restraints and slights put upon him," claims (not very sincerely) liberty of conscience for the Army, and concludes, "Let me be heard with freedom, honour, and safety,

and I shall instantly break through this cloud of retirement, and shall show myself ready to be *Pater Patriæ*. CHARLES REX."

The King's flight was ill-planned and unfortunate in the execution. The weather was stormy, the roads bad. The King undertook to guide the party, and lost his way in the forest country. A ship which was to have met him near Southampton failed to do so. At last, whether by settled plan or by a sudden freak, Charles determined to throw himself on the hospitality of Colonel Hammond, Governor of the Isle of Wight (13th November). Nothing could have been more ill-judged. Hammond, when he received the King's message, "grew so pale, and fell into such a trembling, that I did really believe," says Berkley, "he would have fallen off his horse." The King himself was no less disturbed when he understood that Hammond would only receive him as a prisoner, but rejected the proposal of his friends to "secure" Hammond; and so with something of a chivalrous feeling surrendered himself to the captivity which only ended with his life.

In the meantime Cromwell's fortunes had been served by an unexpected turn of events. The Army Council had prevailed upon their officers to summon a general Rendezvous of the forces. It was subsequently arranged that the three brigades should meet at different times and places. The first meeting was held near Ware, in Hertfordshire, the 15th of November. Two regiments appeared at the

Rendezvous without orders, and wearing mutinous papers in their hats, with this motto, "England's Freedom, and Soldiers' Rights." One regiment, that of Colonel Harrison, tore up their papers when summoned, and returned to obedience; the other, the most mutinous in the Army, that of Colonel Robert Lilburne, had driven away all their superior officers, not without violence, and now tried to raise the same spirit among the other regiments also.

Cromwell at once, "with an angry and down look," rode up to the head of the regiment, and ordered them to take the papers from their hats. They refused. He ordered several men out of the ranks. These, with two or three superior officers, were handed over to the Provost Marshal. A court-martial was held on the spot, at which three soldiers were condemned to death, and one of them, Arnold by name, shot there and then. The rest returned to their obedience; and after this example the other Rendezvous passed off quietly, with the result that the Army were now bound by their own honour as well as military discipline to be obedient to their officers.

This is the first formidable appearance of that set of men called "Levellers," with whom Cromwell had to reckon for the rest of his life. Mutiny was checked just in time; but the Rendezvous at Ware had shown plainly what the wishes of the Army were; and on that day was decided the death of the King, and the abolition of Monarchy in England.

## CHAPTER X.

### *The Army and the King.*

WE must pass shortly over the complicated history of the next few months. The Army leaders had decided to comply with the wishes of the soldiery, and it may be taken as pretty certain that the King's death was resolved upon by them in the winter of the year 1647-8.

An important debate took place on the 3rd of January, 1648, on the occasion of the King's refusal to entertain the "four bills" presented to him as the basis of a personal treaty, in which "Mr. Cromwell, to show that this was no time to speak sense and reason, stood up, and the glow-worm glistening in his beak," (an allusion to Oliver's "copper nose,") "he began to spit fire; and as the Devil quoted Scripture against our Saviour, so did he against his Sovereign, and told the House, 'It is written, thou shalt not suffer an hypocrite to reign' (and what then, I pray you, will become of himself?) . . . it was now expected by the good people of the nation and the Army that the Parliament would come to some

resolution and settlement as the price of all the blood and treasure that had been expended in the war, and that they would not now leave them to the expectation of any good from a man whose heart God had hardened; but if they did, they should be forced to look for their preservation some other way," and so laid his hand upon his sword, "to show that it was so decreed . . . as the only graceful conclusion of so gallant a piece of oratory." A coarse portrait, but drawn to the life.

The result of the debate is thus described by Cromwell :

"The House of Commons hath this day voted as follows: 1st, they will make no more Addresses to the King; 2nd, none shall apply to him without leave of the two Houses upon pain of being guilty of High Treason; 3rd, they will receive nothing from the King."

This is known as the Vote of Non-Addresses, an answer to Charles's refusal to treat on the terms offered by Parliament. It was meant and understood to be a declaration of an intention to settle the kingdom "without and against the King," and was the preamble to his trial and death.

The Commons justified their action by a long and bitterly hostile review of the King's conduct from the beginning of his reign, justified in itself neither by the facts nor the occasion. Charles was thenceforward treated as a prisoner, and confined strictly within the walls of Carisbrooke Castle.

He could now expect nothing from his English subjects. But the Scots had not given up Monarchy; and in the same month as the vote of "Non-Addresses" was passed, he concluded a secret treaty with the Scots Parliamentary Commissioners, then in the island, by which he promised to support the Presbyterian establishment in England for three years, to confirm the Covenant, and suppress Independency; whilst on their side the Scots, if fair words failed, were to send an army into England to restore him to the throne. This treaty is known as "the Engagement," and those who supported it as "Engagers." It was not universally accepted in Scotland; but an army of 40,000 men was voted, "the Malignant party prevailing in the Parliament of Scotland," and though they never reached more than half that number, they were a real army, and quite as formidable for what they might bring about in England as from their own strength.

This new Scotch invasion, and the accompanying disturbances in England and Wales, are what is called the Second Civil War. Risings were arranged in all parts of England, under old Royalist leaders. There was to be an invasion of Cavalier refugees from France and Holland, helped with money or men by Cardinal Mazarin or the Prince of Orange, Charles's son-in-law, the Treaty of Westphalia having now set many soldiers at liberty, who were to be got cheap. It was hoped that the Presbyterians of England would



make common cause with those of Scotland against the tyranny of the Army over King and Parliament, and would accept the help of the Cavalier interest against the common enemy; and from the violence of the outbreak there seemed to be some likelihood of this. The chief points of danger were South Wales, where Colonel Poyer, Governor and mayor of Pembroke, headed a Royalist combination of several counties; Lancashire and the North, where Sir Marmaduke Langdale, hoping for speedy aid from Scotland, held Berwick and Carlisle for the King against Lambert and Haslerig, Governor of Newcastle; and Essex, where Goring (Earl of Norwich), Capel, and Lucas, held Colchester against Fairfax. Cromwell was sent into Wales, with orders to join Lambert as soon as he found it possible to do so. Separated now from Fairfax, and with an army 8,000 strong under his sole command, his course to absolute power was plain before him. But before we give an account of his actions in war, some notices of his conduct at home require attention.

Colonel Ludlow, an old friend and companion in arms of Cromwell, but who writes with a strong feeling against him as a traitor to the Republican cause, tells us that about the outbreak of the Second Civil War "Cromwell promised a meeting of divers leading men amongst the Presbyterians and Independents, both members of Parliament and Ministers, at a dinner in Westminster, under pretence of endeavouring a reconciliation between

these two ecclesiastical interests;" but without result, not even a Cromwell being able to find a common ground on which these fanatics could meet, so like each other as they were.

A conference was also held of those called the *Grande*s of the House, the chief officers of the Army, and the Commonwealthsmen (*i.e.* Republicans), in which the question of the settlement of the kingdom was debated, whether it should be Monarchical, Aristocratical, or Democratical. The latter was strongly argued for by the "Commonwealthsmen." Cromwell, however, "professed himself unresolved;" and probably at once to break off a tiresome and embarrassing discussion, and to relieve an irresistible impatience by an act of buffoonery (as was often his way), "took up a cushion" (says Ludlow) "and flung it at my head, and then ran down the stairs; but I overtook him with another, which made him hasten down faster than he desired."

In the early part of the year he had a severe illness, of which he writes to Fairfax: "It hath pleased God to raise me out of a dangerous sickness. . . . I received in myself the sentence of death, that I must learn to trust in Him that raiseth from the dead, and have no confidence in the flesh. It's a blessed thing to die daily; for what is there in this world to be accounted of? . . . I find this only good, to love the Lord and His poor despised people, to do for them, and to be ready to suffer with them."

His family appear to have been living in London at this time. His son, the eldest son now, Richard, afterwards Lord Protector, had left the Army, and was settling down in the country. Oliver had time to attend to family business, as the busiest men have always most time to spare. He shows himself a careful father, and a keen man of business, not inclined to give up his own or his son's rights in a settlement with Mr. Mayor, of Hursley, near Winchester, whose daughter Richard Cromwell shortly after married. Part of the land settled was confiscated property, granted to Cromwell out of the Marquess of Worcester's estate in Gloucestershire, and thereabouts. He did not refuse the money, which was necessary for playing a great part in public affairs; but neither then nor ever was Oliver greedy of money for himself or for its own sake, as his enemies themselves allowed. He had an opportunity of showing this about this time; for he at once offered for State purposes "one thousand pounds annually, to be paid out of the rents of those lands . . . for the space of five years; and remitted to the State an arrear of pay due to him when Lieutenant-General unto the Earl of Manchester, as also a great arrear due for about two years being Governor of the Isle of Ely."

Somewhere in the spring of 1648, it would seem, just about the time when the Scotch army were getting under way, a momentous meeting of Army leaders took place at Windsor. The "elements of destruction" could not be conjured into

harmony. King, Scots, Presbyterians, Independents, Officers, Agitators, Levellers, had all their separate ends, and would agree to no compromise. War must decide it, and war was flaring up on all sides.

At this crisis the officers of the Army agreed to meet at Windsor, in order "to go solemnly to humble their souls before the Lord," and to get guidance whether, as some said, they ought "to lay down their arms, to quit their stations, and put themselves into the capacities of private men," or make head against their enemies; in any case to search out their own iniquities, and how and when they had failed. They held discussions, with prayer and fasting, for four or five days together: "in all their transactions grounded upon the 1st of Proverbs v. 23: 'Turn you at my reproof.' Especially they looked over the business of Newmarket, in which they all professed their integrity."

"At Windsor," says another account, "we spent one day in prayer, inquiring into the causes of that sad dispensation, coming to no further result that day, but that it was still our duty to seek. And on the morrow we met again in the morning, where many spake from the Word, and prayed; and the then Lieutenant-General Cromwell did press very earnestly on all there present to a thorough consideration of our actions as an army, and of our ways particularly as private Christians, to see if any iniquity could be found in them."

After searching their hearts, they believed that the cause of the Lord's departing from them had been "those cursed carnal conferences" with the King and his party. "The Lord led us," he proceeds, "not only to see our sin, but also our duty, and this was so unanimously set with weight upon each heart *that none was able hardly to speak a word to another for bitter weeping.*" . . . "And we were also enabled then . . . to come to a very clear and joint resolution on many grounds at large there debated amongst us, *that it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for that blood he had shed and mischief he had done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in these poor nations.*"

## CHAPTER XI.

### *The Second Civil War.*

WHILE the leaders of the Army at Windsor were praying to the God of vengeance, the war was being rekindled on all sides, and the disaffection to Parliament and the Army was shown by many petitions coming in, clamouring for a "personal treaty" with the King.

The immediate point of danger for which Cromwell was told off to serve was Pembroke, which was held by Colonel Poyer, a mutinous, discontented man of no very good reputation, "sober and penitent every morning, but in the afternoon drunk and full of plots," sometimes putting out "blue and white colours for Oath and Covenant," sometimes "bloody colours for King and Common Prayer." As early as March he had got together some guns and ammunition, and set up his standard against the Parliament. All the "Malignancy" in Wales, always a stronghold of Royalism, was mustering round him, the gentry all for the King, the common people following the gentry, smiths cutting their bellows, and running away when the

Parliament troops came near, "not a horseshoe nor smith to be found there." Cromwell's commission was issued on the 1st of May. Cromwell got to Pembroke on the 24th, and writes from the "Leaguer before Pembroke," three weeks later, to say that the garrison are short of supplies and mutinous, threatening to "cut Poyer's throat, and come all away to us." He had not got his regular siege-train, but had "scraped up a few" guns, and hoped to get the town "in fourteen days by starving." Whilst waiting for his guns Oliver was not idle. He speaks himself as "a little too much solicitous . . . it's our fault; and indeed such a temper causeth us often to overact business." He hunted up Malignants, showing perfect knowledge of men and places. All is as sharp and clear as daylight; sharp and clear too the following warning to "the Hon. Richard Herbert," at St. Julians: "Now, I give you this plain warning by Captain Nicholas and Captain Burgess, that if you harbour or conceal either of the parties, or abet their misdoings, *I will cause your treasonable nest to be burnt about your ears.*—  
OLIVER CROMWELL."

Oliver had still to wait; for he would not accept of anything short of unconditional surrender, never liking to do things by halves; and the surrender did not come till the 11th of July, when Cromwell was free to join Major-General Lambert in the North, where he was desperately wanted. For Duke Hamilton, with what could

be mustered of his 40,000 Scots, was on the march southwards. Lancashire, Cheshire, and even Yorkshire, were holding out a hand of association to the disaffected in Wales; and unless the danger could be met at once, all the work of six years might have to be done again. Cromwell was confident of victory over the Scots; for he had (says Clarendon) "so perfect a contempt of the whole strength of that nation that he never cared what advantage-ground they had upon any field, or what place they ever possessed." But his men were ill-found in equipments, and even inclined to mutiny for want of pay; and Oliver now, as always, would not fight with any but the best tools. About a fortnight after the surrender of Pembroke, he wrote from Gloucester for 3,000 pairs of shoes, and three days later (31st July) he had got as far as Leicester, "without shoes and stockings." Lambert wrote urgently to Cromwell to hasten northwards; for further advance of the enemy meant plundering of the country by the Scots, who seemed inclined to take possession of the land, "with wives and children." Besides the want of shoes (which was supplied at Leicester), he was delayed by the sickness of his men, who were "so extremely harassed with hard service and long marches, that they seemed rather fit for a hospital than a battle." He sent on about 600 of the cavalry, and followed himself with the rest of his men, some 7,000, "much increased by Notts, Leicester, and Derby forces," which he had



beaten up on the way. He joined Lambert at Wetherby on the 12th of August, having written to him not to fight till himself came up.

We have not space to give a detailed account of the battle which followed. The battle of Preston, as it was called, lasted three days, and was fought over a tract of country reaching from Warrington to Preston, a distance of more than twenty-five miles. The Scots army, ill-commanded and ill-organized, was too widely scattered to fight with good effect. Cromwell, with an army amounting to a third part of the enemy, sprang upon them unawares and scattered them to the winds. Twenty-four thousand men, who were advancing to conquer England for the King, were dispersed by one onset of the Parliament's army. The only resistance was made by the English troops under Langdale (of whom Cromwell "acknowledged that he never saw foot fight so desperately as they did"); the rest were slain and scattered, with the loss of "half a hundred" men. "I have 10,000 of them prisoners," writes Cromwell, 20th August. "We have killed we know not what, but a very great number; having done execution upon them above thirty miles together, besides what we killed in the two great fights, the one at Preston, the other at Warrington." So complete and easy was the victory, that it is hardly reckoned among Cromwell's glories, though no victory of his was more fruitful of results.

Cromwell knew that the fruits of a victory are

reaped after it has been won, and had no mind to repeat the fault of Manchester at Newbury. He wrote to the Committee at York: "I could wish you would draw out whatever force you have, either to be in his (Hamilton's) rear, or to impede his march; for I am persuaded if he, or the greatest part of those that are with him, be taken, it would make an end of the business of Scotland."

The Duke of Hamilton was taken two days later at Uttoxeter, on the border of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, "ill, and unable to march." "As we rode from Uttoxeter," says one of his officers taken prisoner with him, "we made a stand at the Duke's window, and he looking out, with some kind words we took our eternal farewell of him." He was beheaded not long after, leaving his honours to his brother, Lord Lanark, who was, like him, to fight and bleed for his sovereign.

Thus ended another Scottish invasion. But Berwick and Carlisle had to be retaken, and there was work to be done in Scotland itself; and Cromwell, leaving the fragments of Hamilton's expedition to be gathered up by others, marched straight into Scotland to settle things there.

On his way he has time to write two private letters. The first is addressed to his kinsman, Oliver St. John, and contains not a word either of politics or of personal glory. It opens another window into Cromwell's soul; and for its style, the story of the withered grass has a pathos and

power which mark other writings and sayings of his, rough as they may be :

“KNARESBOROUGH, September 1, 1648.

“DEAR SIR,—I can say nothing ; but surely the Lord our God is a great and glorious God. He only is worthy to be feared and trusted, and His appearances particularly to be waited for. He will not fail His people. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord !

“Remember my love to my dear brother H. Vane : I pray he make not too little, nor I too much, of outward dispensations :—God preserve us all, that we, in simplicity of our spirits, may patiently attend upon them. Let us all be not careful what men will make of these actings. They, will they, nill they, shall fulfil the good pleasure of God ; and we shall serve our generations. Our rest we expect elsewhere : that will be durable. Care we not for to-morrow, nor for anything. This Scripture has been of great stay to me ; read Isaiah viii. 10, 11, 14 ;—read all the chapter.

“I am informed from good hands, that a poor godly man died in Preston, the day before the fight ; and being sick, near the hour of his death, he desired the woman that cooked to him to fetch him a handful of grass. She did so ; and when he received it, he asked whether it would wither or not, now it was cut. The woman said, ‘Yea.’ He replied, ‘So should this Army of the Scots do, and come to nothing, so soon as ours did but appear,’ or words to this effect ; and so immediately died ”

The other is to Lord Wharton

“September 2, 1648.

“MY LORD,—You know how untoward I am at this business of writing ; yet a word. I beseech the Lord make us sensible of this great mercy here, which surely was much more than the House expresseth. I trust [to have, through] the goodness of our God, time and opportunity to speak of it to you face to face. When we think of our God, what are we? The best of us are, God knows, poor weak saints ;—yet saints ; if not sheep, yet lambs ; and must be fed. We have daily bread, and shall have it, in despite of all enemies. There’s enough in our Father’s House, and He dispenseth it. I think, through these outward mercies, as we call them, Faith, Patience, Love, Hope, are exercised and perfected,—yea, Christ-formed, and grows to a perfect man within us. . . . My Lord, I rejoice in your particular mercy. I hope that it is so to you. If so, it shall not hurt you ; not make you plot or shift for the young Baron to make him great. You will say, ‘He is God’s to dispose of, and guide for,’ and there you will leave him.

“My love to the dear little Lady. . . . The Lord bless you both.

“Your faithful friend and humblest servant,

“OLIVER CROMWELL.”

The English army entered Scotland on the 21st of September. Some time was spent before the capitulation of Berwick and Carlisle could be received. On the 4th of October Cromwell was received in great state at Edinburgh, coaches being sent to

bring him and his retinue into the town ; for Cromwell never declined state on state occasions. He was now entertained at a sumptuous banquet in the castle by the Marquess of Argyle and the Governor, David Lesley, nephew of old Leven, and lodged at the Earl of Moray's house, in the Canongate, with a guard of honour and salutes from the castle.

His business at Edinburgh was to confirm the change in affairs which had shifted power from the "Engagers" to the Kirk party. He requires that the Committee of Estates should "give assurance, in the name of the Kingdom of Scotland," that none of those who were concerned in the "Engagement" should "be employed in any public place or trust whatsoever." He makes no show of treating Scotland as a conquered country. England will be content that the Scots should interfere no more, but leave them to settle their account with the King. It is said that the trial and execution of Charles was at this time mentioned in conversation between Cromwell and Argyle, the head of the Kirk party.

On the 7th of October Cromwell turned his back on Edinburgh, and marched homewards ; taking measures on his way to secure Pontefract Castle, which was held by a desperado, Colonel Morris, who had served both sides, and owed his neck to both. Oliver writes for money, powder, battering guns, match, bullet, mortars, and shells. He never thought it worth while to make war

cheaply, thinking it "good thrift" to spend money and save time.

From Knottingley, near Pontefract, he wrote a sharp letter to the authorities at Goldsmiths' Hall, then settling about delinquents; blaming them for too great leniency towards those who were engaged in the Scottish invasion. It seems that that peril, being over, was in some danger of being forgotten; and there was talk of fining or banishing such delinquents as the Duke of Hamilton himself, Capel, Holland, and others, which had even taken shape in Parliament votes. Cromwell would have Goldsmiths' Hall know that he "has his nose turned towards Westminster," and means to know the reason why. "Gentlemen," he writes, "I wonder how it comes to pass that so eminent actors should so easily be received to compound. . . . Now, when you have such men in your hands, and it will cost you nothing to do justice; now after all this trouble, and the hazard of a second war,—for a little more money all offences shall be pardoned! Though my sense does appear more severe than perhaps you would have it, yet give me leave to tell you, I find a sense among the officers concerning those men, to amazement: . . . not so much to see their blood made so cheap, as to see such manifest witnessings of God, so terrible and so just, no more revered."

## CHAPTER XII.

### Pride's Purge.

ON the 6th of December Cromwell arrived at London, in the midst of great events foreshadowing greater.

We must go back some months, and trace the course of affairs since Cromwell received (at the beginning of May) his commission to Wales and the North. The second war, as we saw, had been flaring up in several places at once. Cromwell had quenched it at Preston, Fairfax at Colchester, where a horrible tragedy had been enacted in a three months' siege, starving women driven from the town, and then driven back from the leaguer; the water cut off, and the town reduced to drink water thick with mud, or poisoned by the bodies of dead horses; "all the dogs and cats, and most of the horses, already eaten," the Commandant, Lord Goring, telling the women "they must eat their children if they were in want;" soldiers adventuring their lives for a piece of a "stinking dead horse" which lay outside the town, and at the end two brave soldiers; Sir Charles Lucas and

Sir George Lisle, shot by sentence of a court-martial; and in the town "a sad sight of so many fair houses burnt, and so many inhabitants sick and weak with living upon horses and dogs, and eating the very draught and grains for preservation of their lives."

While Cromwell was playing cat in Wales and Lancashire, the Westminster mice began to take courage, as if they had forgotten that he would be back again some day. The Vote of Non-Addresses, and the angry Declaration which followed it, were passed, as we saw, in January. The ascendancy of the Independents seemed complete; but the outbreak of the Second Civil War caused a revulsion of feeling. If so many were willing to risk their lives for Charles, notwithstanding all warnings, how many more must there be who would gladly see him victorious, and restored to his throne, though they might not wish to risk their necks for him? The King's power had been usurped by Parliament, and the Parliamentary power had now come into the hands of a set of armed fanatics holding exaggerated un-English notions, who, after destroying monarchy, might go on to destroy all order in religion, and all distinction in rank, and perhaps abolish property as well.

The Presbyterian section of the House of Commons believed themselves to possess the true constitutional and parliamentary tradition, and knew that their views were more popular in the



country generally, and especially in the city of London, than those of the more violent party. To have conducted affairs successfully for seven difficult and eventful years, and then to be put aside for no fault of theirs, because a few resolute men had an army at their back, was hard and unfair; but after confessing defeat in 1647, it was absurd to claim authority in 1648. If Cromwell and Fairfax had not delivered the Parliament and the country from the second war, Hamilton and Goring, Lucas and Capel, would have settled the affairs of the kingdom, not Hollis and his excluded colleagues. They would not see the facts, and therefore they failed, and became ridiculous.

Parliament then, ignoring Cromwell at three hundred miles distant, amused itself with replies to the Scots Commissioners, and the completion of the new fabric of Church discipline and doctrine. The attendance in Parliament had been thin since the last summer, the beaten and disheartened Presbyterians keeping away from the House. They came back in April full of the hope of somehow turning to profit the invasion of the Scotch Army. Little by little they declared their Royalist leanings; they pledged themselves to maintain Government by King, Lords, and Commons; drew nearer and nearer to negotiations with Charles; granted an amnesty to all concerned in the tumults of the summer of 1647; then ventured on a bolder step—the restitution

of the excluded Members to their places in Parliament.

At length (3rd July) they rescinded the Vote of Non-Addresses, and entered into direct negotiations with Charles. They tried to bind him by preliminaries, but the King would not be bound; and a treaty was begun at Newport, near Carisbrooke (18th September), without any obligations on the part of the King, and with a significant restoration to royal state and liberty on parole. We do not observe that Cromwell made any move in this matter. He knew what "an accommodation with a beaten tyrant" meant, and that this must come to nothing. Parliament might do more mischief if they had not this bone to gnaw. The Army would be back before anything was concluded, and "give the law to both Parliament and King." As Ireton said, "He hoped it would be such a peace, between King and Parliament, as he might with a good conscience fight against them both."

The King conducted the negotiations himself, showing great ability and industry. He was a match in argument for all who were brought to oppose him, and his written answers are excellent in reasoning and rhetoric. Indeed, if we leave out of sight the fact that he did not mean to abide by a word of what he said, we have before us, in the words of his enemies, "the spectacle of a conqueror in sufferings and patience, a denier of himself for the good of his people, and what not that is glorious and endearing;" in a word,

the Royal Martyr, as he appeared to the eyes of the Church of England for two centuries to come. Charles's object was to put his adversaries in a false position by appearing to concede all that could reasonably be conceded by a King and a Christian, whilst endeavouring all the while to secure himself by flight, by foreign aid, or by the help of Ormond and an Irish army. Yet he was so careful to maintain his personal honour that he refused to break his parole when a good opportunity of doing so offered itself, and he was assured that his enemies would not keep faith with him. The King, it seems, thought that honour and honesty need not always go hand in hand; much as Cromwell, for his part, believed that religion, for the sake of policy, might sometimes dispense with honesty.

The Treaty dragged along until there was little left for Parliament to demand or the King to concede. The Parliament did not close with the King—retained partly by genuine scruples, partly by the fear of not satisfying the Army—but they voted, without a division, on the 5th of December, at nine o'clock in the morning, having sat all night and all the previous day, "That the answers of the King to the propositions of both Houses are a ground for the House to proceed upon for the settlement of the peace of the kingdom."

Cromwell, whom they thought still at Pontefract, in those very hours in which they were listening (with incredible patience) to placable Mr. Prynne's

enormous speech in favour of the King, and trying to hope that they were saving the nation, was hastening up to town, to dispose as he thought best of King and Parliament.

He had not been inactive in the last two months. He had left Ireton with Fairfax. Hammond, in the Isle of Wight, was in correspondence with him. He busied himself among the gentry in the Northern Counties to set them against the Newport treaty, and is said to have "formed a scheme for the several regiments to petition the Lord Fairfax, one after another, demanding justice upon the King." Such petitions were presented by Ireton's regiment and several others; and the result of the quarrel between the Army and the Parliament was that, on the 16th of November, Fairfax sent by the hands of Colonel Ewer a long "Remonstrance," setting out fully the demands of the Army in urgent, not to say peremptory, terms.

In this, the most important of all the State papers of this eventful year, the Army lay down the rule of *Salus Populi suprema Lex*, "proceeding in justice against the King, and settling the kingdom without him." On the ground that God had borne witness to their cause in the result of the war, they declare that government is in the people, and that a King betraying his trust forfeits all claim and allegiance; and conclude, from a review of the present King's policy, that his people "are free to take their best advantage" of one who had been "the author and continuer of a most unjust

war." They then raise a doubt whether public justice and the wrath of God can be satisfied without the punishment of the chief offender—one who had shown no repentance, who had been so clearly delivered into their hands, and with whom it was impossible to arrive at any settlement, since no bonds of law or of trust—"the very oath of God"—would hold him. In conclusion, they demand justice on the capital offender and some of his instruments, the dissolution of the existing Parliament, the reform of Parliaments, and that for the future no King should reign in England except by election of the people. All this would be the work of a few months; and when it was done the Army would gladly disband if it were thought necessary.

Some light is thrown upon the Army Remonstrance, as regarding Cromwell himself, by a letter of his, written from Knottingley, near Pontefract, 25th November, 1648, to his friend Robert Hammond. It is worth attentive study; for, though written with a purpose, it is written with strong conviction of the righteousness of the cause which he is upholding; and there glows throughout it a fire of anger against the King, kindled it may have been years ago, but heated seven times hotter in consequence of the second war.

There are few of Cromwell's letters which more completely express him than this. The tender playfulness with which he reproves his "dear Robin" from being "ensnared" by "fleshly

reasonings," which make us say "heavy," "sad," "pleasant," "easy:" his natural sincere humility—"Dear Robin, thou and I were never worthy to be doorkeepers in this service:" his belief in "judgments"—"My dear friend, let us look into Providences; surely they mean somewhat. They hang so together; have been so constant, so clear, unclouded:" his manner of opposing right and reason to authority—"Authorities and powers are the ordinance of God. . . . I do not therefore think the authorities may do *anything*, and yet such obedience be due. All agree that there are cases in which it is lawful to resist:" his solid grasp of facts, and unscrupulous use of them in argument, with something of craft and something of enthusiastic faith in his cause, his mission, and himself: Whether by the Newport Treaty "the whole fruit of the war is not like to be frustrated, and all most like to turn to what it was, and worse. . . . *Whether this Army be not a lawful power called by God to oppose and fight against the King upon some stated grounds, and . . . may not oppose one name of authority for those ends as well as another name:*" a belief which carried Oliver through his difficulties till his last day—"since the quarrel was lawful in itself:" his lofty contempt of enemies—"Fear of the Levellers, of whom there is no fear:" his anger blazing out again against the King—"To think the people of God may have as much or more good the one way than the other? . . . Good by this man—against whom,

*the Lord hath witnessed, and whom thou knowest !”* All these reveal Cromwell's heart and mind. A hypocrite does not write in this manner. The letter speaks, and most of his letters do so, as strongly for the essential uprightness of his character, as his actions show how it could be warped by policy and self-will.

Cromwell knew better than any of his enemies, because he knew them all, how bitter against him they were, and how great was his danger. The memoirs of Denzil Hollis, one of the Eleven Members, show how fiercely he was hated by the Presbyterian party, whose spokesman Hollis was. During Cromwell's absence in the North, Major Huntingdon, of Cromwell's own regiment, resigned his commission, and published a paper of reasons for doing so, in which, after charging Cromwell with dishonesty, treason, and ambitious designs, he declares that all the evil proceeds from the influence of evil principles, declaring that Cromwell had often professed certain rules of morality as a standard of what was lawful.

· They are as follows :

1. That every single man is judge of just and right, as to the good and ill of a kingdom.

2. That the interest of honest men is the interest of the kingdom.

3. That it is lawful to pass through any forms of government for the accomplishing of his end ; *and therefore, either to purge the Houses and support the remaining party by force everlastingly, or to put*

*a period to them by force, is very lawful, and suitable to the interest of honest men.*

4. That it is lawful to play the knave with a knave.

All this would be worthless if it had been written five years later; but it is remarkable as showing what was, even then, believed of Cromwell's principles and methods of conduct.

On the same day on which Cromwell wrote his letter from Knottingley (25th Nov.), the Army, finding that their remonstrance of the 16th November was not to be listened to, moved on to Windsor. There they spent the next day wholly in prayer. The next day Colonel Ewer was put in command of the Isle of Wight, and on the 1st of December the King was removed from Carisbrooke to Hurst Castle. It is difficult to believe that so important a step as the seizure of the King's person by the Army should have been taken without Cromwell's consent, though, as was usual with him, his hand does not appear in it. We may also conclude without much doubt that Cromwell had a hand in the other proceedings of this week, though he was not in London till five days later.

The Army being still at Windsor, on the 29th of November the Council of Officers sent an angry letter to the Commons, accusing them of "treacherous or corrupt neglect of, and apostacy from, the public trust reposed in them," and declaring themselves bound in duty to God and the kingdom to execute justice and mercy, and bring about



a settlement of the nation. "For all these ends," say they, "we are now drawing up with the Army to London, there to follow Providence as God shall clear our way."

The Parliament made no answer to this address. They trifled with debates and votes, expressing surprise and displeasure at the removal of the King and the march of the Army, but unable to hinder either. They showed their impotence by advising the City not to refuse a sum of £40,000, demanded in order to avoid "plunder or other wrong" by Fairfax, who arrived at Whitehall on the 2nd of December. On the 4th, as we have seen, the House debated the King's propositions, and after sitting all night, voted on the morning of the 6th, to proceed upon them to a settlement of the kingdom.

That vote decided the fate of the House of Commons. The same day, writes Ludlow (5th December), "some of the principal officers of the Army came to London . . . and consulting with some members of Parliament and others, it was concluded, after a full and free debate, that the measures of Parliament were contrary to the trust reposed in them, and tending to contract the guilt of the blood that had been shed upon themselves and the nation; that it was, therefore, the duty of the Army to endeavour to put a stop to such proceedings." A committee was appointed, which agreed to draw up the Army the next morning, and went through the list of all the Members

of the House one by one, "giving the truest characters we could," says Ludlow, "of their inclinations;" an easy task, as parties were clearly divided.

Not till this was completed did Ireton go to Fairfax and acquaint him with "the necessity of this extraordinary way of proceeding, having taken care to have the Army drawn up the next morning by seven o'clock."

Accordingly, on the 6th of December, 1648, two or three regiments of horse and foot appeared at Westminster; and a guard was set at all the doors of the House, under the command of Colonel Pride, who, holding a list of names in his hand, stopped each Member as he came to the doors, and handed over to the guard forty-one of their number, pointing, when asked his commission, to the guard of "armed soldiers standing round about with swords, muskets, and matches lighted."

This is known as "Pride's Purge." It continued for another day, till nearly a hundred and fifty members were retained in custody or excluded from the House.

Cromwell, on his arrival at Whitehall, where (it is said) he lodged that night "in one of the King's rich beds," "declared that he had not been acquainted with this design; yet since it was done he was glad of it, and would endeavour to maintain it." The next day he received the thanks of the purged House, a sorry tribute; for what with "seclusion," imprisonment, and the voluntary

absenting themselves of many who thought they were not wanted there, no more than fifty-three Members out of three hundred and forty who voted on the 5th of December were ever present at one time in the House between this date and the beheading of the King. The Army were now the only power in the State, and the handful of Members who still sat at St. Stephen's did nothing more than register the decrees of the Army by revoking all the votes passed against their wishes.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *The King's Death.*

TEN days passed, during which the Army brought the King up from Hurst Castle to Windsor and prepared all for his trial. When the King's trial was first moved in the House of Commons Cromwell stood up, and said "that if any man moved this upon design he should think him the greatest traitor in the world; but since Providence and necessity had cast them upon it he should pray God to bless their councils, though he was not provided on the sudden to give them advice."

On the 1st of January, 1649, an Ordinance was passed by the House of Commons appointing a High Court of Justice for the hearing, trying, and judging of the King; and another declaring that it is treason in the King of England for the time being to levy war against the Parliament and people of England. Other votes followed declaring that the people were, under God, the original of all just power; and that the Commons had the power to make laws without King or Peers.

Of the trial and execution of the King we need not speak here, except so far as Cromwell

was personally concerned with the proceedings. He was present at every sitting of the Court throughout the seven days of the trial, and his name stands third on the list of those who signed the death warrant. He said to Algernon Sydney, "I tell you, we will cut off his head with the crown upon it!" He is said to have "threatened Colonel Downs into an acquiescence with the other regicides," to have held Colonel Ingoldsby's hand whilst he signed, and to have smeared Henry Martin's face with ink as soon as he had signed his own name. It is generally asserted also that he desired to view the King's body as it lay in the coffin, and tried to open the coffin with his staff; but, failing to do so, took a sword from a soldier, and forced the lid open with the hilt of it. "He then stood and gazed at it steadily, saying that it appeared sound and well made for a long life;" or, according to another account, "that if he had not been a King he might have lived longer."

The credit of Charles's death, for good or evil, is generally given to Cromwell. He was actively consenting to it, and without his consent and co-operation it would not have been carried out. But we have seen that the idea of bringing the King to justice, as well as other extreme ideas, arose in the Army itself. It is probable that it was in the first instance favoured by Ireton, and not countenanced by Cromwell for some time. A consideration of Cromwell's life does not lead to

the conclusion that he was a great originator of ideas. He possessed a splendid capacity for doing work, and for judging what was to be done, and could be done at a given moment; a great power of organizing, and knowledge of men, and how to use them; in short, a vast practical talent, but little of the creative or shaping power which originates all it achieves, like the genius of Napoleon or Alexander. He would seem to have approached all political questions in the same way;—using the suggestions and notions of others; judging what methods of dealing were before him; watching and waiting for the turn of events, if there was nothing to be gained by immediate action; and his course once chosen he went forward and through with it irresistibly, dragging with him or trampling under his feet all weaker men. Such was his method of acting. His method of judging was more complex, and is difficult to seize. He is commonly described as a mixture of fanatic and hypocrite. If we say that he was a man of earnest religious conviction, and of deep and crafty policy, justified by self-deceit, we shall more truly express what is meant. We have seen, in his recorded letters and speeches, what course he took with regard to the King. It is not to be denied that he had entirely changed, not his opinion of the King—for he had seen through Charles in 1642—but his estimate of what could be done with him; and had come to regard him with an enduring anger as the chief hinderer of

the cause of peace and religion in England. Once inclined to look this way, and give up "carnal counsels" and hopes of accommodation, nothing could be more certain than that Cromwell's mind would fix on the ideas of "providences," "mercies," and "judgments," with which his thoughts were always travailing, and the examples of the slaughter of the Lord's enemies with which the Old Testament abounds. It was his nature to pursue a straight course through many windings and doublings. He made up his mind finally and unalterably that Charles must be put to death; and to compass that end he dealt with men of all opinions, betraying his counsel to none, and using all to bring his purpose about.

There may be two opinions as to whether Charles I. deserved his death or not. There can hardly be two opinions as to whether it was good or bad policy to put him to death. Charles I., in prison or in exile, would have been no more dangerous than Charles II. proved to be. The crown of martyrdom given him by his judges gave a new lustre to the crown, which Prince Charles claimed as his successor. His death made the conquest of Scotland a necessity. It raised new enemies in every part of Europe; for monarchy was sacred in all countries except Switzerland and Holland. The horror of the King's death turned into irreconcilable enemies all those Royalists and Presbyterians who would have forgotten a deposed King if he had been succeeded by any of his sons, or by his

nephew, the Prince Palatine, who was willing and importunate to be styled Charles II., had the idea of despotism ever been seriously considered.

These objections must have occurred to Cromwell's mind. We believe that his answer to them was sincere; that the Lord had witnessed against Charles by providences and dispensations, and that the land could not be cleansed of the blood shed therein but by the blood of him that shed it. This was the grand foundation; after that came the sense of insecurity in dealing with Charles; the human desire for vengeance, now settled into a deep conviction, after seven years of bloodshed and twenty-four of civil strife, and the recent kindling of a new war; the theory of the sovereignty of the people, and the natural equality of kings and subjects; lastly, the desire to try the experiment of a Commonwealth in a new soil; a desire the natural fruit of a successful rebellion against the abuse of ancient institutions. Cromwell himself, however, was never an earnest Republican. What he wished for (to quote his own words) was a state like that of Israel, under the judges, "that God would give rulers as at the first, and judges as at the beginning," with himself, "a most unworthy person," as the first judge. He always believed heartily in command; and if we call it "ambition" to desire command, he confessed himself ambitious. But to believe that he deliberately cajoled Charles to his ruin, and coldly contrived all the events of 1647 and 1648 in order to destroy the King and the Monarchy, and raise him-



self to sovereignty on the ruins of a republic, and to set down all Cromwell's success to a "Machiavelian" subtlety, is to imitate the error of those who would make the Devil omniscient.

Whatever Cromwell's design in bringing the King to judgment, the result of it was to set him at once and unmistakeably in the first place in the kingdom. This is proved as well by the course of events as by the rage of the opposite party. Fairfax is spoken of as "but a sign or a cipher . . . an empty skull, placed in the front of a seditious Army . . . and his company a drove rather than an army, driven by Cromwell in the rear, not drawn by Fairfax in the van. But for you, Cromwell" (it proceeds) "go on, and thus, magnificently mounted on your mighty malt-horse, stamp! stamp! on Royal Majesty; and as you stamp him down, *stamp your own image in his dust.*"

Cromwell was now the right hand as well as the head of his party, and Fairfax must either go on "subscribing what was prescribed," or stand aside and let Cromwell act for himself. He chose the more dignified course; a man who was as fit as any in England to command an army in the field, for there all dulness and diffidence left him, and, like William III., he was never so great as on horseback in the front of an army; but in counsel worse than a cipher; "for this cipher set before the figure makes up a sum," and "what comes signed by him as General signifies the concernment of a whole kingdom."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### The Rump.

IN the afternoon of the 30th of January, 1649, "the fatal blow being struck, the Commons met again," and passed an Act prohibiting the proclaiming of any person to be King of England, Ireland, or the dominions thereof, which was immediately proclaimed by sound of trumpet. On the 6th of February the House of Peers was abolished, and with it royalty "or the power thereof in any Single Person," and a Council of State appointed as the basis of a Republican Constitution. This Council consisted of thirty-eight members, of whom Cromwell was for the present appointed President.

The kingdom was not yet "settled." The miserable remnant of the House of Commons, then and for ever opprobriously nicknamed "The Rump," could not claim to be "the Commons of England in Parliament assembled, representing the People." The functions and authority of the Council of State, the termination of the present Parliament, and the mode of election of a new "Representa-

tive," the relations of the new Commonwealth with Ireland, with Scotland, and with foreign nations; all this and much more had to be settled, and what was as difficult a task as any, the Army had to be kept in good temper, paid its arrears, and disbanded with reward for its service, as soon as this could safely be done. There was also the vast question of religion and religious toleration; for the foundation of the Commonwealth was religion, and not a single public action was performed without earnest prayer and preaching. In the name of God the head of Charles I. had been cut off and Royalty abolished, and in the name of God the new building was rising, at which the labourers worked with their swords by their side.

Little is known of Cromwell's occupation during these busy weeks. We do not need his own confession that he was apt to be "a little too much solicitous," to be sure that every part of the new Government passed under his view, and was approved or rejected by Council and Parliament, much as he pronounced upon it. He had hard work in persuading timid or doubting Members to take their part in the new Government. Vane, Fairfax, and half of those Members of Parliament who were nominated to serve on the Council of State, from conscience or fear of consequences demurred to signing an "Engagement," by which they were to declare that they approved of what the House of Commons and the High Court of Justice had done against the King, and of the

abolition of kingly Government and the House of Peers. Fairfax himself is said to have desired to be excused subscribing his approbation of what was past; a desire the less intelligible as every act of the Army, short of the very last, had been done under his hand. So serious did the difficulty appear that Cromwell consulted with the Members nominated, and changed the form of the Engagement into one of acknowledgment of, and allegiance to, "the Government of this nation for the future, in way of a Republic without King or House of Peers," which formula was accepted without difficulty, and the new Council began its sittings. It was an anticipation of a modern Ministry, but with no acknowledged chief and no certain relations, either with the Parliament or the Army; a useful institution, but not yet a Government.

The dangers which surrounded Cromwell now that he had risen to the height of power were many and terrible. He had led the spirit of revolution thus far. It now became his duty, being in the place where he was, to control it; and the act of violence which he had done rendered more violence necessary. Henceforward to the end of his life he had to reckon, on the one hand, with the open and secret enmity of the Cavalier party, including at least half of the gentry and clergy of England, and those whom they influenced; with the angry disappointment of the Presbyterian party and the moderate reformers; and with all the

reasonable or unreasonable wrath of the Agitators, Commonwealth's men, and Levellers, who had hoped to see a perfect democracy, and found that, so long as Cromwell had a hand in affairs, the democracy was to be settled on a practical footing, and, if need required, controlled by force of arms.

To deal with all these interests it was necessary for Cromwell to meet plot with counterplot, and make use of all the methods of secret information; to check freedom of speech and action, and by turns deceive and coerce. The word Necessity—"the tyrant's plea"—was henceforward constantly on his lips, and, like other liberators, he was drawn on by a fatal necessity to imitate the very principles and methods of the tyranny which he had overthrown.

The young Republic had many dangers, in which Cromwell had to share, besides those which concerned him personally. Foreign nations were not likely to make war in the King's quarrel, but English agents were insulted, and some of them murdered; and it was thought well to send out squadrons, under Blake and Edward Popham, to the coasts of Ireland and Portugal, to look after Prince Rupert and his Royalist vessels, and to show the world that the power of England had not gone to sleep.

The Scotch Parliament had proclaimed Charles II. as soon as they heard of his father's death; but the example of Preston was too recent to need repeating at this moment, and with Lambert and

Haslerig to look after the Northern Counties, the Scots might be left to themselves without much danger till their time of reckoning came.

Ireland was a more pressing evil. That country had been neglected by both parties during the course of the Civil War. Ireland had indeed relapsed into its usual anarchy since Strafford left it in 1640. The national and religious quarrel had not been fought out, as in England, but was being confusedly transacted in all parts of the country, with plundering, fighting, and burning; private revenge taking the place of public justice. It was necessary that a stop should be put to this disorder, and a settlement made. That settlement could only be made in a Protestant sense, and by an English army; and as it required both a soldier to conquer the country, and a statesman to settle it, Cromwell was a fitter man for the business than Fairfax, whom, moreover, his late defection from the extreme party had cast into the shadow. He still remained Lord General, and all was done in his name; but there seems to have been no dispute about the appointment of Cromwell, and not Fairfax, for the Irish service.

Cromwell was accordingly appointed Commander-in-Chief and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with Ireton, his son-in-law, as his second in command (31st March).

Before taking the field he had his hands full of business; for besides that involved in the organization of troops for what was practically foreign

service, and as new to the General as to his men, there occurred at this time a dangerous revolt against the new settlement.

The Levellers were up again, headed by their "noisy" leader John Lilburne, whose pluck and honesty claim our respect, though his virtues, being generally exercised out of season, did little good to anyone, and never failed to get himself into trouble. The first serious symptom of discontent was a petition to Parliament, presented by some troopers (26th February, 1649), asking for redress of grievances. This was regarded by the Army Grandees as a breach of discipline. The soldiers then presented another petition to Fairfax and his Council, complaining angrily that they were "commoners as well as soldiers," and had with all Englishmen the right to petition Parliament, reminding the officers of the "engagement" at Newmarket Heath, and denouncing the new tyranny of the Council of State, which threatens (they say) to swallow up Parliament altogether; and if so, "Farewell Parliaments—farewell freedoms." The petitioners were punished by court-martial, and dismissed the Army; but the spirit which they had raised again was not easily laid.

Lilburne published pamphlet after pamphlet, complaining that the liberties of England had been sold to the Army Grandees, who meant nothing honest, and only cared for their own greatness. He was sent to the Tower, to be tried for high treason, an act which spread "great alarm

throughout the kingdom." Petitions were presented in his favour. The petitioners were rebuked by the Speaker. Lilburne issued from his prison another pamphlet, containing a scheme for a new parliament and a succession of annual parliaments. Again he complained that the power of the State was not exercised by the people of England represented in Parliament, but by a fraction of a Parliament which had never been truly representative, ruled by a Council of State, which in its turn was ruled by a junto of officers—Cromwell, Ireton, and Harrison.

To let the present Rump Parliament continue without a fresh election was not what the founders of the Commonwealth had intended. But the Commonwealth had been founded without the consent of the people of England. It was disliked on all hands. The King's execution had been a complete failure, except as a terror to the Cavaliers. Its effect as a solemn act of justice had been neutralized by the publication of *Eikon Basilike*, which, purporting to contain the King's most secret thoughts and prayers during his confinement, ran through many editions in a few months, and at once raised the memory of Charles I. to the level of a saint and martyr.

It was impossible to trust to a free election of Parliament according to the newly-propounded scheme of representation. Four hundred men so chosen would either have restored Charles II. to the throne, or have set up something very



different to what either Lilburne or Cromwell desired.

Things being as they were, Cromwell was right in asserting the only authority existing, that of the sword. But it was a hard necessity, and Cromwell must have begun to feel that he held his power, "not so much out of hope of doing any good as out of a desire to prevent mischief and evil," like "a good constable set to keep the peace of the parish."

*Inter arma silent leges* is a true motto, though a bad one; and Oliver expressed it in English when he was heard through the keyhole by Lilburne "very loud, thumping his fist upon the council table till it rang again. 'I tell you, sir, you have no other way to deal with these men but to break them to pieces, or they will break us'; that if they did not do it, they would render themselves the most silly, low-spirited men in the world to be routed by so contemptible and despicable a generation of men."

It was not long before Cromwell had to act up to his words. Meanwhile he was making his preparations with all speed for the Irish campaign. That no offence might be given on the ground of partiality, the regiments to go to Ireland were drawn by lot. The officers of the regiments so chosen "expressed much cheerfulness at the decision;" but the soldiers, as in 1647, did not like the business, murmured and hesitated. At last Whalley's regiment, quartered in London,

broke out into open mutiny (26th April). Fairfax and Cromwell went in person into Bishopsgate Street "to force them out," took fifteen prisoners, and condemned six to death. One of the six condemned was shot the next day in St. Paul's Churchyard. His name was Lockier, "being at his death about twenty-three years of age. He, it is said, was a pious man, and of excellent parts, and much beloved." He was buried at Westminster on the 30th. The soldiers and the common people, and "some thousands more of the better sort," followed him to the grave with "trumpets sounding a soldier's knell; with bundles of rosemary, one-half stained with blood, and knots of black and sea-green riband tied to the hats and breasts of all the crowd; and the women brought up the rear."

So much sympathy showed a wide disaffection; and a week later, at a Rendezvous in Hyde Park of the General's and Lieutenant-General's regiments, Cromwell made a speech to the soldiers, praising the Parliament for its zeal in punishing grand delinquents, its readiness to put an end to its own sitting, and to make arrangements for future Parliaments, and its care of the Navy and Army; and was pretty well received. One trooper "made some objections, and was bold;" a few more, when ordered, pulled out the Levellers' colours which they were wearing. All was quiet for the moment.

Suddenly, at Salisbury (1st May), the Army's head-quarters, three or four regiments mutinied, and marched towards Oxford. Fairfax and Crom-

well followed them in all haste. They were overtaken and surprised at Burford, "not so much as on horseback," and taken prisoners. A few days later (17th May) one of their leaders, Thompson by name, was shot, with two of his companions. Thompson's brother was killed at Northampton, scorning to take quarter; and no more fighting was needed, though disturbances had broken out in Devonshire, Lancashire, the Isle of Wight, and elsewhere.

Fairfax and Cromwell made their head-quarters at Oxford, and were "solemnly welcomed and highly feasted" by the University, receiving the degree of D.C.L., and being praised by "Mr. Orator Button" and other dignitaries; the undergraduates, contrary to the usual custom, being admitted to see the show.

A few days later Cromwell was in his place in Parliament, where he made a relation of the discomfiture of the mutineers and Levellers, and received the thanks of the House "for his great care and courage in this business." A vote of thanks to Fairfax was also passed.

On the 7th of June the City gave a sumptuous feast at Grocers' Hall to the House of Commons, the Army, and the Officers of State, "the entertainment" at which "was very free and cheerful, 'welcome' in capital letters, written on a banneret, upon most of the dishes, which were a very great number. No drinking of healths or other uncivil concomitants formerly of such great meet-

ings, nor any music but of the drum and trumpet. A feast indeed of Christians and chieftains, whereas others were rather of Cretians and cormorants, and (which is to be remembered) the poor was not forgotten at this feast; for besides the overplus of victuals left at dinner sent to several prisons in London, £400 was given and distributed amongst the poor of the several parishes in and about London."

It took a month more to complete preparations for the Irish campaign, and by the beginning of July all was ready. Cromwell had not undertaken this great charge without "seeking the Lord." When the command was first offered he met the officers of the Army at Whitehall in prayer, and did not till after a fortnight's delay accept the commission. So too now, on the 10th of July, Tuesday, there was a meeting at Whitehall, at which "three Ministers did pray; and the Lieutenant himself, and Goff, and Colonel Harrison did expound some places of Scripture excellently well and pertinent to the occasion." So, fortified by prayer and preaching, he addressed himself to his journey; and on the same afternoon "he went forth in that state and equipage as the like hath hardly been seen, himself in a coach with six gallant Flanders mares, whitish-grey, divers coaches accompanying him, and very many great officers of the Army; his life-guard consisting of 80 gallant men, the meanest whereof a Commander or Esquire; in stately habit, with trumpets sounding almost to

the shaking of Charing Cross had it been now standing; of his life-guard many are Colonels, and believe it, it's such a guard as is hardly to be paralleled in the world. And now have at you, my Lord of Ormond!"

\* \* \* \* \*

If "you say 'Cæsar or nothing,' they say 'a Republic or nothing.' The Lord Lieutenant's colours are white."

Cromwell did not forget his friends, though in haste to be gone. He writes from Bristol, 19th July, 1649, to Richard's father-in-law, Richard Mayor, of Hursley:

"I am very glad to hear of your welfare, and that our children" (Richard, and Dorothy Mayor, to whom he was married on the 1st of May last) "have so good leisure to make a journey to eat cherries. I have delivered my son up to you, and I hope you will counsel him; he will need it. . . . I wish he may be serious; the times require it. . . . I hope I shall have your prayers in the business to which I am called."

There are a couple of letters something like this also written to Hursley. The first, sent back to Hursley by the hands of Richard Cromwell, who had accompanied his mother to see her husband so far on his journey, mentions him as follows:

"I have committed my son to you; pray give him advice. I envy him not his contents" (do not grudge him his happiness), "but I fear he should be

swallowed up in them. I would have him mind and understand business, read a little history, study the mathematics and cosmography; these are good, with subordination to the things of God: better than idleness or mere outward worldly contents. *These fit for public services, for which a man is born.*"

The other is to his daughter-in-law, Dorothy Cromwell, written the same day (13th August), to be taken to her by her husband:

"MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—Your letter was very welcome to me. I like to see anything from your hand, because indeed I stick not to say I do entirely love you; and therefore I hope a word of advice will not be unwelcome nor unacceptable to thee.

"I desire you both to make it above all things your business to seek the Lord, to be frequently calling upon Him . . . and be listening what returns He makes to you; for He will be speaking in your ear and in your heart if you attend thereunto. I desire you to provoke your husband likewise thereunto. As for the pleasures of this life and outward business, let that be upon the bye."

And more to the like effect, which would certainly be thought honest and genuine if it were not written by Cromwell. Yet what reason had he to pretend godliness here any more than natural affection?

He sailed for Ireland with a squadron of twenty-five vessels, and after being becalmed for a day, arrived at Dublin with a fair wind on Wednes-

day, the 15th of August (Ireton with the rest of the fleet, some seventy sail, not arriving till ten days later); and was "most heroically entertained with the resounding echoes of the great guns round about the city, and great concourse of people to see him, to whom he made a very grateful speech with his hat in his hand; and there was a great cry that they would all live and die with him."

## CHAPTER XV.

### Ireland.

IT would be impossible to give within these limits any satisfactory account of Irish affairs, which nine years of anarchy had involved in an inextricable tangle. It is enough to say that the King's death and the sudden danger from England had united all the Roman Catholics, both native Irish and English of the Pale, with the Episcopalian Protestants headed by the Marquis of Ormond, who had served Charles faithfully and honourably since the beginning of the war. Ormond had granted to the Roman Catholics political equality, full toleration and endowment of their religion, and some measure of political independence. There was to be a Roman Catholic army, 17,500 strong. The Protestants of Munster had acceded to this arrangement, and the only objectors were the Scotch Presbyterians of Ulster, one section of the Ulster Catholics in Ireland under Owen Roe O'Neal, and (a notable exception) the English Republican garrisons of Dublin and Londonderry. Ormond had reduced



Drogheda and other towns within the past year, and driven Monk out of the country.

Ireland seemed to be completely lost. Cromwell had no hesitations about the matter in hand—no thought of the wishes of the Irish nation crossed his mind. "A great work," writes Cromwell, "was to be carried on against the barbarous and bloodthirsty Irish and their confederates and adherents, and for propagating of Christ's gospel, and establishing of truth and peace, and restoring of this bleeding nation of Ireland to its former happiness and tranquillity." In other words, Ireland was to be subjected to England, and Popery put down.

A victory over Ormond, gained by Colonel Jones on the 2nd of August at Rathmines, relieved Cromwell of all uneasiness about the safety of Dublin—"an astonishing mercy" (he writes). "These things seem to strengthen our faith and love against more difficult times."

Dublin being secure, Cromwell determined to move upon Drogheda (or Tredagh), twenty-five miles north of Dublin, which he accordingly did on the 31st of August. The intervening fortnight was spent in "new-modelling," drafting, and re-arranging, "purging" bad soldiers and officers, "issuing notices against plunder and cruelty," and in other ways making the force lately under Jones's orders more trustworthy and manageable. For an army "made up of dissolute and debauched men," strict discipline was above all things necessary. The Lord Lieutenant's orders were carried out,

and on the march to Drogheda two men were hanged for plundering.

But within the rules of war, and against such an enemy as the Irish were believed to be, Cromwell had no relentings. The storm of Drogheda is one of the gravest charges against Cromwell; this is the history of it.

Cromwell came before the town on the 2nd of September. The garrison were between 3,000 and 4,000 strong, horse and foot, chiefly English, "almost all their prime soldiers, under the command of their best officers," and Sir Arthur Ashton, the Governor of the town. After some delay, some of the siege guns being on board ship, Cromwell's batteries began to play on the town on Monday, the 10th of September. The town was summoned to surrender; but "no satisfactory answer" being received, Cromwell began "to beat down the steeple of the church on the south side of the town," from which the enemy annoyed them, "firing out of it with long fowling-pieces." All Monday (10th September) and Tuesday (11th September) they battered at the church tower with no great result, but made a breach in the town wall near St. Mary's Church, intending to storm as soon as possible, and hold the church. "Being somewhat long in battering," the enemy had time to entrench himself very strongly in a triple line on each side of the church, and behind the lines they had drawn up some troops of horse.

The storm began about five or six in the after-

noon of the 11th. The forlorn hope, led by Colonel Castle, got within the defences to the number of 700 or 800 foot. Castle was killed, and "the enemy disputing it very stiffly . . . through the advantages of the place and the courage God was pleased to give the defenders . . . the stormers were forced to retreat quite out of the breach, not without some considerable loss." Cromwell then dislodged the enemy's cavalry by a discharge of round shot—went in person to the breach, put himself at the head of a reserve of Colonel Ewer's regiment of foot, and giving the word "Our Lord God," "led them up again with courage and resolution." This (which Cromwell passes over in his dispatch) gave fresh courage to the troops, and though they "met with a hot dispute, both horse and foot being against them, they carried the entrenchments and held the church. A strong party of the enemy, with Sir Arthur Ashton, the Governor, got into a fort called the Mill Mount, "a place very strong and of difficult access." "Our men," says Cromwell, "getting up to them were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town; and I think that night they put to the sword about 2,000 men." A party of the enemy had sought refuge in three towers, one of them that of St. Peter's Church. "These being summoned to yield to mercy, refused; whereupon I ordered the steeple of St. Peter's Church to be fired, when one of them

was heard to say, in the midst of the flames, 'God damn me, God confound me; I burn, I burn!' The next day the other two towers were summoned," and as the defenders of one of them had killed and wounded some of Cromwell's men, when they surrendered "their officers were knocked on the head, and every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes."

The horrors of the storm were not over. The slaughter was continued that day and the next. "In St. Peter's Church near 1,000 of them were put to the sword, fleeing thither for safety. I believe all their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously but two; the one of which was F. Peter Taaff, brother to the Lord Taaff, whom the soldiers took the next day and made an end of. The other was taken in the Round Tower, under the repute of a lieutenant, and when he understood that the officers in that tower had no quarter, he confessed he was a friar; but" (adds Cromwell savagely) "that did not save him."

The slaughter was complete. "I believe" (says Cromwell) "we put to the sword the whole number of the defendants. I do not think thirty of the whole number escaped with their lives." "Sir" (writes Hugh Peters, the chaplain), "the truth is Drogheda is taken; 3,552 of the enemy slain, and 64 of ours; Ashton, the Governor, killed; *none spared*. . . . I come now from giving thanks in the great church."

It has been commonly said that a large number of the townspeople, men, women, and children, were massacred at the same time with the soldiers and priests; and Cromwell's own letter enclosed a list of the slain, ending with the words "besides staff-officers, chirurgeons, &c., *and many inhabitants.*" Indeed, we cannot suppose that so terrible an order as that given by Cromwell was carried out to the letter and without excess; but it is probable that Cromwell's orders were carried out as fairly as such orders can ever be carried out when the soldier, on fire with military rage and the anger of a repulse, spares nothing that comes in his way. The blood shed at Drogheda is on the head of the General who gave the order for "no quarter," whether justified by the order or not. Cromwell is no more and no less to blame for the death of unarmed inhabitants than any commander who forbids his men to give quarter. He himself had no relentings. "I am persuaded" (he writes) "that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbued their hands in so much innocent blood; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future; which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret."

It appears probable, on a consideration of the whole affair, that Cromwell had undertaken the business of Ireland with a determination to have an invincible army, and to make short work of

the war, whatever means he had to use. He chose to look upon Ormond and his army, without distinction of nation, as enemies to the Parliament and the Protestant cause, and as guilty of the blood shed in the massacre of 1641. He was convinced that in dealing harshly with the Irish nation he was carrying out the will of God, who had "testified" against Popery and Royalism. Another reason for severity was that it would spare "further effusion of blood," as no doubt it did for the time.

But war is in its mildest form so horrible a thing that "extraordinary severity" without extraordinary provocation is cruel or barbarous, and thus excites resentment, and thereby in the end defeats its own object. So it has been in the present case. Probably more blood has been shed in Ireland in consequence of the hatred excited by such action as Cromwell's than was spared at the moment by the terror of the example of Drogheda. Of that severity which was practised here there had been many instances in the Continental wars of this period, but not many in our own Civil War; and the justification of it is to be found rather in the particular circumstances of any given siege than in any general rule of storm and surrender. The special causes for severity at Drogheda, besides the common rule of a storm, were, the repulse suffered in the first attack, and that vengeance for 1641 which had not yet been exacted. These would have justified severe treatment. But what

may be a lawful "severity" in the case of a few hundreds becomes barbarity where thousands are subjected to it; and it is indeed by this question of proportion that Cromwell must be judged, and condemned if it appears that he shed more blood than was necessary. But when all is said the necessity is doubtful, and therefore the example doubtful, and the deed, being of such vast magnitude, not fully and clearly justified.

There remains one question more: Did Cromwell advisedly and deliberately plan the massacre, or did he order it "in the heat of action," as his despatch would seem to imply? We incline to the latter, both because it is the natural meaning of his words, and because he seems to imply that the whole affair was overruled rather than designed, "a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches. . . . It was set upon some of our hearts that a great thing should be done; not by power or might, but by the Spirit of God;" and this is borne out by similar language used about the storm of Wexford, which clearly was not premeditated.

As for the poor priests and friars who were "knocked on the head," they would have met with no better treatment from any other English commander. In the eyes of the Puritans they were priests of Baal, and were so dealt with wherever they were found as long as the war lasted.

As for the "shipping to the Barbadoes" of those

who were admitted to mercy, that had been done in the case of the Welsh and Scotch prisoners taken in the campaign of 1648, and was looked upon by the conquerors as a measure of clemency rather than severity towards delinquents whose lives were forfeited. Henceforward, till Cromwell's death, batches of prisoners were constantly "Barbadosed," as the cant phrase was; that is, sent over to be sold for slaves, some for a term of years, some in perpetuity, to the planters in those islands, much as Russian political prisoners are sent to Siberia in our own time.

From Drogheda the army marched to Wexford, leaving some garrisons on the way. Wexford was summoned (3rd October), lest "innocent persons should suffer with the nocent"—a threat the meaning of which was clear enough when interpreted by the fate of Drogheda. A parley followed, in which Cromwell showed both patience and good temper. He could not, however, afford to wait, and went on with his siege preparations. The batteries were finished by the 10th; and the next day, "having spent near a hundred shot, the Governor's stomach came down," and he asked leave to propose terms. When they came Cromwell found them so full of "abominableness" and "impudency" that he answered them thus:

"Sir,—I have had the patience to peruse your propositions, to which I might have returned an answer with some disdain. But to be short . . ."



He then offers life and liberty to the soldiers, life to the officers, security to the inhabitants of Wexford and their goods. “. . . I expect your positive answer instantly. . . .” Before Cromwell’s answer could be delivered, the breach in the castle walls became so wide that Capt. Stafford, one of the commissioners sent from the Governor, surrendered the castle, “upon the top of which our men no sooner appeared, but the enemy quitted the walls of the town, which our men perceiving, ran violently upon the town with their ladders and stormed it.” The town was thus taken, as it were by an accident, without opposition; the gates were opened to let the cavalry in, though they could do but little service, all the streets being barred with cables. The soldiers had got a taste for blood at Drogheda, and Cromwell indulged them without restraint. If Drogheda has not enough to terrify, he must add Wexford. “When they were come into the market-place” (he adds), “the enemy making a stiff resistance, our forces broke them, *and then put to the sword all that came in their way.* Two boatfuls of the enemy attempting to escape, being overpressed with numbers, sunk, whereby were drowned near three hundred of them. I believe in all there was lost of the enemy not many less than two thousand, and I believe not twenty of yours killed from first to last of the siege.” Then follows a strange justification of this violence, which may be compared with that of Drogheda. “And indeed it

hath not without cause been deeply set upon our hearts that we, intending better to this place than so great a ruin, hoping the town might be of more use to you and your army; yet God would not have it so, but by an unexpected providence, in His righteous justice, brought a just judgment upon them, causing them to become a prey to the soldier, who in their piracies had made preys of so many families, and made with their bloods to answer the cruelties which they had exercised upon the lives of divers poor Protestants, two of which I have been lately acquainted with."

Cromwell's perseverance at Wexford in the "severity" of Drogheda takes away all need for excuse. The thing may be justified or condemned; it cannot be extenuated. At Wexford, as at Drogheda, priests were killed wherever they were found; and Cromwell's letter expressly says that many of the inhabitants were "killed in this service." We may pass over as an invention a horrible story which represents Cromwell as forbidding quarter to be given to two hundred women who fled to the Town Cross, and laughing and jeering at them; but there is no doubt that at Wexford women as well as men were sacrificed to the rage of the soldiery, and Cromwell, as we see, did not greatly trouble himself to excuse what was done; and all was accepted with pious thankfulness by the Parliament, who expressly voted "approbation of the execution done at Drogheda, as an act both of justice to them and

mercy to others, who may be warned by it," and ordered a general day of thanksgiving for the two successes.

The fall of Drogheda and Wexford was followed by the surrender of Ross and other places. The fortune of the war was not uncertain; but the enemy were still strong in the field and in garrisons, and though Cork and Youghal had fallen, Waterford, Limerick, and other towns held out. Military operations use up the strength of an army more quickly than the home government understands. The English force was scattered in garrisons and weakened by sickness, so much so that Cromwell could hardly afford to take more towns, and wrote pressingly for recruits, money, clothes, shoes, and stockings, "that so poor creatures may be encouraged." If "I did not think it *your best thrift* I would not trouble you at all with it. . . . I tell you, a considerable part of your army is fitter for an hospital than the field."

Cromwell stayed at Ross till the latter part of November, being detained there by sickness; thence he marched to Waterford, where he arrived on Friday, the 23rd.

Cromwell's success, however, was not without reverses. He was obliged, "by reason of the tempestuousness of the weather," to leave Waterford and put his men into winter quarters at Youghal. The march began 2nd December, "it being," says Oliver, "so terrible a day as ever

I marched in all my life." Besides this check, Cromwell's companion in arms, Lieut.-General Michael Jones, died of fever at Dungarvan. "What England lost hereby," he writes, "is above me to speak. I am sure I lost a noble friend and companion in labours. You see how God mingles out the cup to us. Indeed, we are at this time a crazy company. Yet we live in His sight, and shall work the time that is appointed us, and shall rest after that in peace."

Waterford did not fall; but Kilkenny, Cork, and Kinsale were all surrendered. The campaign went on throughout the winter; though regular operations did not begin again till 29th January, 1650, on which day, the weather being mild, the army broke up from their winter quarters at Youghal. Cromwell was not idle during his short cessation from severe military duty. He had much to do as Lord-Lieutenant—settling courts of judicature in Dublin, collecting money for his troops, visiting all the garrisons in Munster, and doing other necessary work. Among other things he gave a striking instance of his patience, his zeal for religion, and at the same time his complete contempt for the Irish nation and their Church, by writing a long argumentative reply to a manifesto put forth at Clonmacnoise by the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland, in which the English are accused of having disposed of the estates of Irishmen, of intending to "extirpate" the Roman Catholic

religion, and of killing innocent persons, and banishing prisoners untried to the Barbadoes.

Cromwell in his answer lays much stress upon the Irish massacre of 1641. "You," he says, "unprovoked, put the English to the most unheard-of and most barbarous massacre (without respect of sex or age) that ever the sun beheld." An unjust accusation, but believed to be just by every English Protestant. As for "extirpation" of the Mass, "extirpation means a thing already *rooted* and established." Now this has been so little the case in Ireland, that "I dare be confident to say that you durst not own the saying of one Mass above these eighty years in Ireland. . . . I shall not where I have power, and the Lord is pleased to bless me, suffer the exercise of the Mass where I can take notice of it."

Secondly, for "the destruction of the lives of the inhabitants of this nation." "Where," he asks, "are the proofs of your assertions about the intention of massacring, destroying, or banishing the Catholic inhabitants?" and "your words are 'massacre, destroy, and banish.' Good now. Give us an instance of one man since my coming into Ireland, *not in arms*, massacred, destroyed, or banished, concerning the massacre or the destruction of whom justice hath not been done, or endeavoured to be done." A challenge not easy to meet; but taken side by side with Cromwell's own acknowledgment, that at Drogheda and Wexford many of the inhabitants were killed, it argues

either an incredible hardihood of lying in the face of facts and acknowledgments, or "not in arms" must mean not in the heat of action, where "innocent and nocent" must suffer alike. Those who were in the streets, or in houses stormed and fought for by Cromwell's soldiers, were thus at their peril. He himself gave no orders to kill defenceless and unresisting persons.

As for banishment, none were banished "but such who, being in arms, might justly, upon the terms they were taken, have been put to death." If, therefore, people put themselves into this condition, "such as God by His providence shall give into my hands may expect that or worse measure from me, but not otherwise."

As to "the ruin of their fortune," it was true that lands had been forfeited; but they were the lands of those who raised massacre and rebellion, and put England to vast expense thereby. He "had come to Ireland to avenge innocent blood, and, with the assistance of God, to hold forth and maintain the lustre and glory of English liberty in a nation where we have an undoubted right to do it; wherein the people of Ireland, if they listen not to such seducers as you are, may use liberty and fortune equally with Englishmen if they keep out of arms. . . . And having said this, and purposing honestly to perform it, if this people shall headily run on after the counsels of their prelates, and clergy, and other leaders, I hope to be free from the misery and desolation,

blood and ruin, that shall befall them, *and shall rejoice to exercise utmost severity against them.*"

This is the principle of the "Cromwellian settlement" of Ireland. It was completed by Ireton and Fleetwood, and partly upset by Charles II. But for more than a century later the principle remained the same—to uphold Protestantism and the English interest; and if the Irish were too wicked or too obstinate to submit to this, then to compel them by the strong hand. In pursuance of this policy, all who could be proved to have been implicated in the massacre of 1641, some two hundred persons, were put to death; many thousands were transported, or exiled to serve against England in continental armies; more than half of the soil of Ireland was confiscated; a large number of the Catholic landowners were compelled to emigrate to the right bank of the Shannon, their lands in the rest of Ireland being given to English "adventurers;" and severe laws were passed to prevent the public exercise of the Roman Catholic religion. Ireland had never cause to love the English; but the national hatred was deepened and made lasting by the severities of Cromwell; and to him as much as to any Englishman is due the long and sad story of the enmity between the two countries, strengthened as it was by the conquest under William III. and the policy of his successors. If Cromwell had lived ten years longer the Irish Catholics might have been converted, as the French Protestants were con-

verted by Louis XIV. But the means employed would have been the same ; and whilst we praise Cromwell's zeal for liberty of conscience, it is impossible to forget that he who "looked for no compulsion in things of the mind" was himself willing to punish difference of opinion with confiscation, banishment, slavery, and death.

By the end of February, 1650, the English power was established in most part of Limerick and Tipperary. On the 22nd of March, Cromwell appeared before Kilkenny, having taken Fethard, Cahir, Cashel, Gowran, and other places, on his march from Youghal, which he had left on the 29th of January. Fethard surrendered to two hundred foot, "with neither ladders, nor guns, nor anything else to force them." At Gowran the commandant, Colonel Hammond, being summoned, returned "a very resolute answer, and full of height." When he came to terms he could get no better conditions than life for the common soldiers ; the officers to be disposed of as should be thought fit. "The next day" (writes Cromwell, without a trace of pity) "the Colonel, the Major, and the rest of the commissioned officers, were shot to death ; all but one, who, being a very earnest instrument to have the castle delivered, was pardoned."

Kilkenny made a stout defence, and beat off the assailants with some loss. The garrison surrendered, and were allowed to march out with some of the honours of war, but ordered to lay down their arms within two miles of the town—



Cromwell's business being "to reduce them from arms." He allowed their priests also to surrender, but warned them "if they fall otherwise into my hands, I believe they know what to expect of me."

For some time past "divers private intimations" had reached Cromwell that his presence in England was desired. But he was in no hurry to leave his charge in Ireland, and disregarded all hints and rumours till he should receive an official recall. This was dated 8th January, but did not come to his hands till the end of March.

In April, a frigate (the *President*) was sent to Ireland "to attend his Excellency's pleasure, and fetch him home if he think fit to come." His own wish might have been to stay and finish the work in Ireland; but English and Scotch affairs were pressing, and he was obliged to leave Waterford untaken. With the exception of some sharp work at Clonmel, where the garrison gave him the slip, and the town surrendered on conditions, he did no more fighting in Ireland. He could leave the rest of the war in good hands, and with all the more ease, as he left with Ireton "a healthy and gallant army, all new-clothed and well armed, and money in their purses. . . . 6,000 good horse, and 18,000 foot." Ireton remained as his deputy, supported by Monk, Coote, and other officers in the North.

Cromwell sailed for England towards the end of May, 1650, and arrived at London on the last day of the month, being received with great honour by

Fairfax and the Officers of the Army, and many Members of Parliament, on Hounslow Heath, and so conducted with "great ceremonies and appearances of joy" to Whitehall, where a dignified residence, called the Cockpit, had been allotted to him by Parliament. It was during this triumphant passage that Cromwell, as he came in sight of Tyburn, and the crowds assembled there, said, "with a smile, and very unconcerned, 'More would come to see me hanged.'"

## CHAPTER XVI.

### Scotland.

THE leaders of Parliament and Council—Vane, Bradshaw, Martin, Scot, and others, high-minded Republicans, and not without some gift of ruling—had a hard task to perform in governing England. Neither then nor ever was Republicanism popular in England. Although the Cavaliers and Levellers were put down for a time, and there were no violent outbursts of discontent, the people were discontented with the change of affairs, and measures of repression were necessary. All disobedience to the orders of Parliament, such as praying or preaching, directly or indirectly, against the Government or Parliament; all mention of the Royal Family otherwise than as enemies of the Commonwealth; even non-observance of days of public humiliation, or thanksgiving, was to be treated as “delinquency.” A severe Act was passed for the restriction of the press, for the liberty of which Milton had written so eloquently. The Royalists were closely watched. They were ordered to leave London and return to their own counties,

and their estates were mercilessly confiscated. Poor delinquents hung about the doors of committee-rooms "in crowds of thirty and forty in a morning" (says Cromwell) waiting in vain to get their "compositions" assessed, and themselves dismissed.

Repression did not cure discontent. Mutinies arose among the troops, and town riots at Oxford and Norwich. The Parliament thought it well to publish a large "Vindication" of its proceedings, urging the necessity of unity, and pointing out that it was unreasonable to raise a cry against discipline and expense, when it was only by means of an army that the peace could be kept. "Physic may be, and often is, more troublesome than the disease, yet the tendency of the one is to health and recovery, the other to death. And we doubt not but, if men would without prejudice consider that they can no more live, or live freely, without an army, than without food, as the present state of affairs stand, they would be beyond the danger of being seduced by these pretences."

In October, 1649, an "Engagement" was drawn up to be "true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England as it is now established, without a King or House of Lords," which was to be subscribed by "all men whatsoever of the age of eighteen years or upwards." As might have been foreseen, this regulation defeated its own object; for unscrupulous enemies subscribed their names

readily, whilst the more conscientious malecontents reconciled themselves to it by the principle of compulsion and "a conquered country."

Sequestrations, restrictions, and engagements could not make the people of England cheerfully obey a revolutionary government. Neither the excellent administration of Fleet and Army, nor the high respect paid by foreign powers to the young Republic, could make it a lawful power in the eyes of most Englishmen. The so-called Parliament was a Rump, not a Parliament; and the only organized power in the country was the Army, their servant turned master. The Parliament was discredited, and the wish for a new Representative was general. The Rump were not inclined to lay down their power. As Henry Martin, the wit of the House, said, "The new Commonwealth was like the infant Moses: none so proper to be its nurse as its own mother." To appeal to a general election now would have endangered all that had been done for the cause. Yet it was necessary for the credit of Parliament that it should be strengthened in numbers; for the number of Members voting was oftener below than above fifty. More of the excluded Members were admitted, after submitting to examination as to their affections to the public interest. This measure increased the number of Presbyterians in the House, and gave occasion to Cromwell to write thus: "I have heard computations made of the Members in Parliament; the good kept out,

the most bad remaining, &c. It has been so this nine years, yet what has God wrought?"

It was expected that the House would put a period to its own existence, and complete the arrangements for summoning a new Parliament. A Reform Bill had been prepared in the spring of 1649, which gave the right of election according to population, and gave promise of a real representation of the nation. But it was carried on languidly, and the Commons by their lukewarmness in the matter gave colour to the imputation that they intended to make their own sitting perpetual.

Cromwell's presence in England was made necessary by the great danger which at this moment menaced the Commonwealth from the North. The young "King of Scots," as the English now styled him, had made terms with his people, and was daily expected to land on some part of the northern coast.

There was no good and clear *casus belli* to justify the invasion of Scotland which was now determined on; but a declaration published by the English Parliament, in the month of June, shows that the two nations were in that temper towards each other in which a small provocation on either side may become a *casus belli*. The English, though they did not proclaim their intention, were determined to keep Scotland as a dependent kingdom, as it had been since the accession of James I. to the throne of England.

The Scots chose to regard this point as depending on their will rather than on that of England. With them (and it is to their credit) the first point was the Covenant and their national religion; and their prime cause of quarrel against the Commonwealth—more deeply-seated than even their wrath for the King's murder—was that defection from the Covenant which was implied by the growth of the principle of Independency and toleration in England. The national antipathy to the English was inflamed by the fanatical Kirk party, who had a great hold on the common people; and the moderate Presbyterian statesmen who had for a long time held power were agreed with them in desiring to assert the cause of King and Covenant, and in doing so to compel England to follow them or break off from them. With these ends in view they proclaimed Charles II. King, not only of Scotland, but of England and Ireland, thereby violating the rights of nations, and giving the English the pretext for war which they perhaps desired. At the same time they moved troops southward, as if intending to invade England. The position of affairs was such that the English Parliament were justified in making war upon Scotland, in order to prevent war being made upon them.

Cromwell, with his "perfect contempt of that nation," and his hatred of Church tyranny, whether exercised by "New Presbyter" or "Old Priest," had no scruples about making war on

Scotland. But the case was different with Fairfax, who was always inclined to the Presbyterian way of thinking. He had learnt by this time that Cromwell had put him aside, and would trample on him if he came in his way ; and he did not care, unselfish though he was, to be a second time lieutenant to his Lieutenant-General. As, however, such reasons as these could not decorously be put forward, he rested his refusal of the command on the ground of his doubt whether the invasion of Scotland was lawful, which we may be certain was an honest scruple. "In case the Scots should invade England," he said, "then he should be forward to engage against them in defence of his own country."

The Council of State appointed a committee of five to confer with Fairfax, who after prayer, begun by Cromwell and continued by the others, discussed the question at length. But Fairfax was not to be prevailed upon ; he would not make war on "human probabilities" of an invasion from Scotland. He could not see that anything which the Scots had done absolved the English nation from the Covenant. He did not feel himself at liberty in his conscience to take up arms against the Scots ; he would rather lay down his commission as General. Cromwell, who had said in a former conversation that he would rather serve under Fairfax than command the greatest army in Europe, here broke in, protesting against the General's resolution to lay down his command,



"begging him to consider his officers, who desired to serve under no other general, and to whom this would be a great discouragement, and as great an advantage to the public enemy."

Fairfax was inflexible, though Cromwell pressed him with great earnestness to reconsider it. We need not suppose that he used any double-dealing, though Cromwell must have known the Lord-General well enough to be aware that his mind once made up was unalterable. He no doubt preferred the first place to the second; but he was still Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and might have gone back to that country with no loss of dignity. The belief, however, that Cromwell was not acting fairly, gained ground so much that he thought it worth while to hold a set conversation with his honest Republican friend, Col. Ludlow, who had lately seemed to hold aloof from him; in which, says Ludlow, "he endeavoured to persuade me of the necessity incumbent on him to do several things that appeared extraordinary in the judgment of some men . . . affirming his intentions to be directed entirely to the good of the people." Ludlow said he had had misgivings when the Army was in treaty with the King, and at other times; but now, as they had declared their adherence to the Commonwealth, he was willing to wait till times were more settled for the complete establishment of the Republic. Cromwell agreed to this, and said that "a free and equal Commonwealth" was the only probable way of

keeping out the old family and Government; "that he looked upon the design of the Lord in this day to be the freeing of His people from every burden, and that He was now accomplishing what was prophesied in the 110th Psalm; spending at least an hour in the exposition of that psalm. 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. . . . The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.' . . . He said also" (continues Ludlow) "that he wished to do his utmost to make a thorough reformation of the clergy and law; but (said he) the sons of Zeruiah are yet too strong for us, and raise the cry of 'property' if we mention the law; which, indeed, said he, served only to maintain the lawyers, and help the rich to oppress the poor; whereas in Ireland, which was 'as a clean paper in that particular,' a judge appointed by himself 'determined more causes in a week than Westminster Hall in a year.'"

He went on from this to talk diffusely about the military government of Ireland, and so, as was his way, brought the conversation round to the point he had intended, which was to press Ludlow to become his Lieutenant-General in Ireland. Ludlow at first refused and then yielded to Cromwell's irresistible power of persuasion.

Ludlow accordingly went to Ireland as second in command to Ireton; and Fairfax on the following day (26th June, 1650) laid down his commission,

receiving a pension of £5,000 a year—for the new Commonwealth was lavish in pensions—and on the same day an Act was passed appointing Cromwell “Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief of all the forces raised or to be raised by authority of Parliament within the Commonwealth of England.” He held now by right of public appointment the first place of power in the nation; a place which he never quitted as long as he lived.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### *The Scotch Campaign.*

WE must now turn to Scotland, the affairs of which country so nearly interested England at this crisis. The execution of Charles, it has been said, had driven Scotland mad. All the agreements and arrangements between Cromwell and Argyle and the other Kirk leaders were forgotten, and the Scottish nation only remembered that they had allowed the King to fall into the hands of his enemies. If the King's son would take the Covenant, all Scotland was ready to welcome him. Commissioners were sent to Charles at Breda, in March, 1650, bearing with them a "handsomely-bound" copy of the Covenants, and other Kirk documents, such as the Longer and Shorter Catechisms. The young King was found more manageable than had been expected. He signed a treaty at Breda, accepting everything, and promised to uphold the Covenant and the Presbyterian systems, and to sign the Covenant on his arrival in Scotland. The most bitter pill (as his faithful servant, Sir Edward Walker, says) which

he had to swallow, was to declare his sorrow for the sins of his father, who had just been murdered, and of his mother, who was still living. It was a fit beginning to the shameless life which he was to lead as King of England.

His cause had been taken up in a more congenial spirit by the noble-hearted Montrose. But he had failed. He had been beaten in battle by the Kirk party, and brought as a prisoner to Edinburgh; and there at the Town Cross, on a gallows thirty feet high, he ended a chivalrous life by a famous death, which his cruel enemies laboured in vain to render infamous (21st May).

A month later Charles II. arrived at the mouth of the Spey, to take possession of his sovereignty, and reconquer England (3rd July). Charles Stuart, a Covenant King, was, as Carlyle says, "an irreducible equation." The Scotch people were in a hopeless dilemma; determined, on the one hand, to maintain the purity of Presbyterianism; and on the other, desirous to restore and keep up their national monarchy. Untaught by the experience of Hamilton, they thought they could make head against the power of England with the other part of the Scotch nation. He had failed with the Malignants; they would win with the Saints. If Charles was more of a sinner than a saint, he must be schooled and ruled, and be kept to the Covenant by force. There is nothing more incongruous than the spectacle of Charles II., who solved all questions by laughter, submitting

to the sour nursing of his mother, the Kirk, and Argyle, her instrument. And there is something pathetic in the belief of the Scots, that God's providences would be measured by the sins or righteousness of their nation, and that He who saved Gideon by few rather than by many would now strike for a repentant and purified people.

Such was the state of things when Cromwell crossed the Border, less than a fortnight after Charles's landing in Scotland. So well had Fairfax and the other officers, and no doubt Cromwell himself, prepared all for the campaign, that Cromwell was able to leave London, on his way to the North, three days after his appointment as General. "He went roundly on with his business," says Whitelocke; but no amount of despatch would have made things ready if the bulk of the work had not been done already. His principal officers were Lambert, who had done good service against Hamilton, an able man and a good soldier, but vain, selfish, and ambitious; Whalley, Cromwell's cousin, and Monk, better known afterwards as Duke of Albemarle, and the hero of the Restoration.

Less than a week later news came to London that the Lord-General Cromwell had got as far as York, "where he was received with a great volley from Clifford's tower," and "highly caressed" by the Lord Mayor and Corporation. The Scots were ready with 17,000 men. Cromwell had about a thousand less, in round numbers 10,000 foot, 5,000 horse, and 700 siege train.

He marched by way of Durham and Newcastle (of which town Sir A. Haslerig was Governor), where a fast was held, and there was much preaching "with great moderation and sweet temper, very heavenly in relation to the present expedition."

The Scots, who had advanced towards the Border to collect reinforcements, fell back towards Edinburgh; the plan of their commander, David Lesley, being to wear the English army out without engaging them in the field. In pursuance of this policy he caused the southern counties of Scotland to be laid waste, "leaving neither hoof nor ear, root nor branch," and thus delayed Cromwell, who was obliged to send provisions for his army by sea to Berwick.

The Army was full of resolution and enthusiasm, "unanimously resolved to live and die with their renowned General, and to fight it out to the last man." So much terror was caused by their approach, that "the gallows and their riders, which stood sentinel at the back-doors of England, faced about, and spurred on to a gallop, being startled at this dreadful thunderclap, 'Cromwell's a coming!'"

The example of Wexford and Drogheda had given Cromwell something of the fame of Tilly or Alva, and he was well known to have no great love for the country which he was invading for the second time; and as leniency had not succeeded on the first occasion, what might be expected of him now?

But Cromwell considered a nation of misguided Saints as a different enemy to a nation of popish rebels and murderers. He put forth a declaration from Newcastle, addressed "To all that are Saints and partakers of the Faith of God's elect in Scotland," by which heading alone it appears that Cromwell and his Army maintained to the full the religious professions under which they took up arms in 1642. Such language was not merely the jargon of the day; it spoke the feelings, and harmonized with the common life, of those to and from whom it came. Crusaders and Saracens, the Albigenses and those who took up arms against them, may have been animated with a like religious fervour; but it has seldom been the case in the history of the world that two armies have stood face to face professing honestly the same cause, full of the same spirit, and differing from each other in points which are now almost too minute to be recognized. After all, the desire of independence and of conquest was at the bottom of the quarrel, though both nations were equally sincere in their religious professions.

Cromwell's Declaration was not likely to win many of the nation to whom it was addressed. It is not a very powerful document, and is indeed little more than an abridgment of the Parliament's Declaration of a few weeks earlier. The weak point of this, as of that, is the slurring over of what the Scotch Parliament had done



in disavowing Hamilton, which, as Fairfax had pointed out, cleared them from any responsibility from that "engagement." But its object was to justify the English, not to convince the Scots, who had chosen their part, and were prepared to maintain it.

Another Declaration was published by Cromwell on his arrival at Berwick, addressed to the people of Scotland, in which he alluded to "groundless and unjust reproaches and most false slanders," making out the Army, or its leaders, "to be rather monsters than men;" appealed to their recollection of his just and moderate conduct on the former occasion; justified the present invasion; and invited the peaceable inhabitants of Scotland to remain in their homes, assuring them that no harm should come to them. And indeed, here as elsewhere, Cromwell's soldiers did no harm to the country through which they passed; or if on some few occasions harm was done, justice on offenders was certain and speedy.

Here comes in another letter to Richard Mayor, written from Alnwick (17th January), speaking of the birth of his grandchild:

"I should be glad to hear how the little brat doth. I could chide both father and mother for their neglects of me. I know my son is idle; but I had better thoughts of Doll . . . The Lord bless them. I hope you give my son good counsel; I believe he needs it. He is in the dangerous time of his age, and it's a very vain world. O how good it is to close

with Christ betimes! There is nothing else worth the looking after. . . . Great place and business is not worth the looking after. . . . I have not sought these things; truly I have been called unto them by the Lord, and therefore am not without some assurance that He will make His poor worm and weak servant to do His will, and to fulfil my generation."

Cromwell, as we have seen, pleaded and argued with the Irish clergy of Clonmacnoise. In the same spirit, though in very different terms, he argued with his brethren of Scotland. The preacher's instinct was always strong in Cromwell, and he had daily reason to believe in his own power of persuasion. Again and again he writes to the leaders of the Scotch Army and Kirk, earnestly dealing with them as men misguided, but acting on the same principles with himself. He writes severely as well as persuasively, pointing out the witness of "providences" to his cause, asking them to judge their own motives in this war, and how far they are clear from the sins of the late King, how far too they can honestly profess to be making a true bargain with a King who can only be got to take the Covenant, as it were, at the sword's point, and to promise obedience to the Kirk under a threat, that if he does not sign all that it proposed to him, the Kirk "will separate the preservation of religion from his interest, and so to the safety of this kingdom."

On the 22nd of July Cromwell's army of "sectaries and blasphemers" left Berwick and crossed

the Tweed into Scotland—the General's own regiment of horse and Colonel Pride's of foot having "the honour of the van."

Cromwell made an address to his army that evening at Mordington, just over the Border. Though a rough speaker, he could speak on occasion with such eloquence that it was said "every word he spoke was a thing," and never shunned speaking either in the field or in Parliament when he saw occasion for it. The Scots had left a bare land behind them. At Lord Mordington's house, where the Lord-General lodged, there was "no household stuff, either so much as cup or glass. Some of our soldiers brought a little raw meat with them, and became excellent cooks; a back (backpiece) makes a dripping-pan, and a headpiece is a porridge-pot."

The army marched along the coast by Dunbar to Musselburgh within a few miles of Edinburgh. Here, on Sunday, 28th July, they offered battle to David Lesley, who, however, was not to be drawn out of his safe hold at Edinburgh, his lines extending from Edinburgh to Leith, and commanded by the guns from Leith, "so that they lay very strong." The next day, Monday, the 29th, Cromwell got possession of a "hill overlooking Edinburgh," but only to see that the enemy's position was so strong that "he did not think it advisable to attempt upon him. The weather now, and through the whole of the campaign, was bad; so sore a day and night of rain as I have seldom seen,"



writes Cromwell. On the 30th of July the English retired to their quarters, and the Scots drew out after them. There was some skirmishing, in which Major-General Lambert was badly wounded ; but the Scots got the worst of it. "We hear their young King looked on upon all this, but was very ill-satisfied to see their men do no better." He would have charged the enemy in person if Leven had not told him "that if he did it he would lay down his commission." And indeed the Kirk, fearing that any tampering with Malignancy might bring a judgment upon them, had dismissed 4,000 of their best troops suspected of being "Engagers," says Sir Edward Walker; so that their army was commanded for the most part by "ministers' sons, clerks, and such other sanctified creatures, who hardly ever saw or heard of any sword but that of the Spirit."

At Musselburgh the army arrived the same night, "so tired and wearied for want of sleep, and so dirty by reason of the wetness of the weather, that we expected the enemy would make an infall upon us, which accordingly they did between three and four o'clock this morning (31st July) with great fury," but were driven back and pursued to within a quarter of a mile of Edinburgh. The English loss was less than a dozen men killed and wounded. The forces so engaged on the Scotch side were "fifteen of their most select troops," "veteran blades," among them many English Cavaliers (the Covenant, we may suppose, swal-

lowed, or at least half-way down their "Malignant" throats), "these and Major Strachan (so the prisoners said) had engaged to the Prince to bring the Lord-General Cromwell to him dead or alive.

As the bad weather continued, and no fighting was to be done, whilst his army was beginning to suffer from sickness and scant supplies, Cromwell changed his plan of campaign. Lesley, it was clear, would not come out. He had complete command of the rich country behind him, whilst Cromwell was far away from his base, with a wasted country before and behind him, and depended on the weather for the possibility of getting at what supplies could come to him by sea. He resolved accordingly to strike at the country to the rear of Lesley, hoping to cut off his communications with Stirling and the Highlands; and moved his army across to the west of Edinburgh, keeping to the northern slopes of the Pentland Hills to prevent an attack on his right flank. He marched on the 13th of August. The army encamped the same evening on the Pentland Hills, many of the tents being in view of Edinburgh city and castle; the place having been chosen with a view to a battle, which was confidently expected, all the more as the Scots were reported to be put on short rations, "a penny loaf for two men for twenty-four hours," so short indeed that many of their men deserted. They had, however, enough appetite for fighting to have new lances made for them on a new model; and enough

fear of the English to represent them as monsters who "would destroy all by fire and sword." "When our men fired the furze bushes, they told the people they were firing of houses."

The battle was not to be. Lesley would not trust the issue of an action in the open field, and if his men were hungry, he knew the enemy would soon be hungrier; and, in fact, Cromwell, finding the "passes towards Queensferry too difficult to attempt in bad weather," was obliged to march back to his provision ships on the 15th August.

The next day a sum of money arrived at Musselburgh, the soldiers were paid, and a week's provisions served out as for a march. No march, however, took place till the 27th, when Cromwell again moved "westward of Edinburgh towards Stirling," the Scots marching out of the town to Corstorphine Hill and Gogar; but without further result than some playing at long bowls between the vanguards of the two armies. All was ready for a battle; the word, "Rise, Lord!" given; but some delay occurred, and nothing was done beyond the maiming and killing of a few on either side by cannon shots. Cromwell himself was fired at by one of the enemy with a carbine, "upon which Cromwell called to him, and said to him, 'that if he had been one of his soldiers he would have cashiered him for firing at such a distance;' which the soldier told to Lieut.-General Lesley, and said he knew it was Cromwell."

On the 28th August Cromwell, disappointed of his battle, marched back as he had come to Musselburgh, a dangerous flank march of some ten miles, not without an attempt on the part of the enemy, taking advantage of "a most tempestuous night and wet morning," to "slip through his whole army," so as "to interpose between us and our victual." They all but succeeded, but "the Lord in mercy prevented it," "the morning proving exceeding wet and dark," and the Scots arriving just too late, as the English had got into a defensible position; and so both armies returned to their camps with no great glory on either side.

It was necessary, however, for the English to leave their camp. Fourteen hundred sick men had been sent to Berwick and Newcastle, and many hundreds more were "falling sick beyond imagination." The weather was stormy and unhealthy—wet and cold, and an early autumn coming on. It was necessary, unless the whole army was to lay down its arms to "Captain Cold and Captain Hunger," that they should have a good magazine for housing the sick men, landing reinforcements, and storing supplies. As it was, they were "put to depend upon the uncertainty of weather for landing provisions, which many times cannot be done, though the being of the whole army lay upon it, all the coast from Berwick to Leith not having one good harbour." It was decided then to retreat as far as Dunbar, and make that the headquarters of the army.



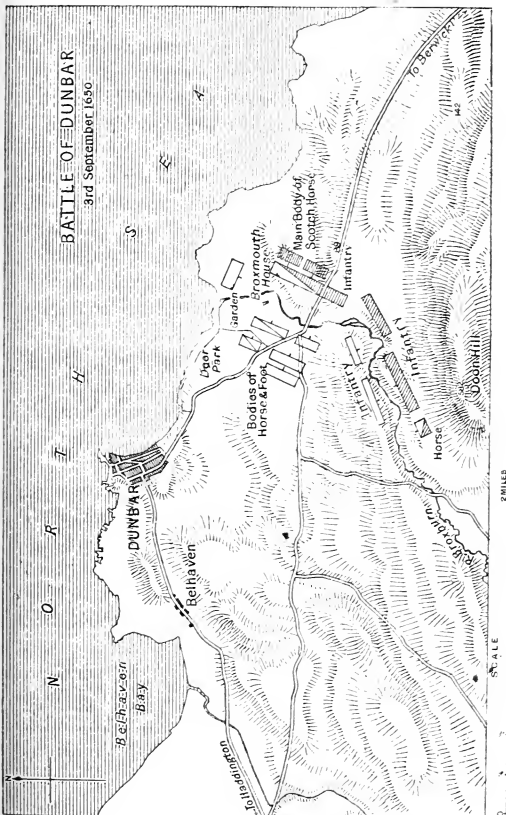
The English army' left Musselburgh on Saturday, the 31st of August, and marched to Haddington; the enemy following "with that exceeding expedition" that they overtook the rear-guard of Cromwell's army in the night, and in the confusion of a night march seemed likely to engage it with their whole army, "had not the Lord by His providence put a cloud over the moon," under cover of which the rear-guard of the English galloped up to join the main body. That same night the enemy made a sharp attack on the English camp at Haddington, but were repulsed. Cromwell offered battle the next morning (1st September), but the enemy refused to meet him on his own ground, having, as they thought, a surer game to play. Cromwell's retreat, and the false report that he had shipped his guns and half of his army, had encouraged Lesley to think that he had nothing to do but to prevent the English from retreating over the Border. His enemy could not stir far from the sea, as two attempts had shown. Lesley himself had perfect freedom of movement, and by keeping to the hills was safe from an attack in flank. Accordingly he pushed his army to the east, along the Lammermuir Hills, to get between the English army and Berwick. This manœuvre was accomplished successfully, and a strong guard was set to hold Cockburnspath, a "pass" lying directly on the road to England, "where ten men to hinder are better than forty to make their way." All this

was accomplished by Sunday, the 1st of September, and on Monday the whole Scots army lay on the slope of Doon Hill, an outwork of the Lammermuir Hills, in such a position that Cromwell must engage them in order to retreat by land, or be put to the greatest straits to get his army on board ship. How dangerous the situation was he acknowledges himself in a letter to Sir A. Haslerig, at Newcastle. Never in his life had he been in such peril; and his position was all the more conspicuous as he had started for this campaign with great designs and high hopes, and had borne himself somewhat arrogantly towards his enemy. "We are," he writes on Monday, the 2nd of September, "upon an engagement very difficult. The enemy hath blocked up our way at the pass at Copperspath, through which we cannot get without almost a miracle. He lieth so upon the hills that we know not how to come that way without great difficulty; and our lying here daily consumeth our men, who fall sick beyond imagination."

The position of the two armies was as follows: The town of Dunbar is situated on a broad peninsula between the bays of Belhaven and Dunbar. Two miles or so to the south of the town rises the Doon Hill, an outwork of the Lammermuir range, which runs westward as far as Edinburgh. Between the hills and the sea the land, now drained and fertile, was full of "swamps and bogs," sloping gently down to the level shore.

# BATTLE OF DUNBAR

3rd September 1650



There are no cliffs, but the sea breaks against flat rocks and reefs, affording dangerous anchorage. Under the western and northern skirts of the Doon Hill runs the Broxburn, or Brock's Burn, a narrow mountain brook, first in a north-east direction, then turning to the north. On the skirts of Doon Hill, before it comes out upon the level, the burn is hidden at the bottom of a deep "clough" or "ditch," some forty feet wide and deep, leaving a small tract of level ground between itself and the hill. The burn could be crossed here, the banks being low; and again a mile lower, where the high road runs from Haddington to Berwick, half a mile north of the first slopes of the Doon Hill. The upper "pass" was occupied by the Scots, after some fighting, on the 2nd. The English army was drawn out for battle most of the day, standing in the swampy ground amid storms of rain and wind, so violent that they could not pitch their tents; but the Scots would not come down from their position, content with having secured themselves from an attack.

The place was full of evil omen to the Scots. Almost on the same ground a great battle was fought in the thirteenth century, in which a Scottish army, 50,000 strong, was defeated by a smaller force of English, under Earl Warenne. They had come from Edinburgh along the Lammermuir Hills to relieve Dunbar, then held by the English, who marched up a valley to meet them. In their scorn and impatience the Scots

left their strong position, and were cut to pieces in the plain. The English slew 10,000 men, and followed up their victory by the capture of Edinburgh. But the Scots had now no thought of omens. They had prophecies and Scripture promises to rest upon, and despised "carnal counsels" of military policy.

The two armies being thus posted, much as when Charles I. had cooped up the Parliament army in "Essex's Pound," at Fowey, "they had disposed of us," says Cromwell, "and of their business . . . believing that their Army and their King would have marched to London without any interruption. . . . But in what they were thus lifted up, the Lord was above them."

We have seen at Basing House how Cromwell would "seldom fight without some text of Scripture to support him." On this occasion he rested on a favourite text of the Puritans, recalling the memory of Abraham's faith and deliverance—the same which had strengthened him at Naseby—"Jehovah-Jireh" *in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen*. "They had," he said "some weakness of flesh, but yet consolation and support . . . that because of their numbers, because of their advantages, because of their confidence, because of our weakness, because of our strait, we were in the mount, and in the mount the Lord would be seen, and that He would find out a way of deliverance and salvation for us; and indeed we had our consolations and our hopes."

The two armies had been ranging themselves during the forenoon and early afternoon of Monday, 2nd September, on either side of the Broxburn. Cromwell's army changed front from south to east along the burn, his right coming up from near Belhaven.

Cromwell's object was to fight a battle; Lesley's either to make him embark his army in the face of the enemy, a most dangerous operation, or to let him retreat by the Berwick road over the Broxburn, and to gain "a dry victory," doing him as much damage as possible by artillery and cavalry on his right flank, without risking a general action with an enemy made formidable by despair.

But, on the other hand, it was believed that half of the English army was invalided, and that the heavy artillery and the sick were already on board ship; and, indeed, Cromwell himself reckons his "sound men" at no more than 7,500 foot, and 3,500 horse. The Scotch army was as full of zeal as the English; their number was nearly double, their position unassailable. It seemed a pity to let the enemy go by, when there was the chance of crushing him at a blow. Besides, "God had delivered Agag into their power, and if they let him go, would require him at their hands." So reasoned the Scots clergy; "their oracles in all causes, military and civil as well as ecclesiastical;" and perhaps "Royalist civil dignitaries" urged the same, taunting Lesley with secret fellow-feeling

for sectarians and regicides. Lesley himself may have been tempted by the sight of a glorious victory in his grasp, and the certainty of blame if he preferred a safe to a showy policy, and let his enemy go away unhurt. At any rate "the clergy's counsel," says Oliver, "prevailed, to their no great comfort, through the goodness of God."

The Doon Hill lay clear in view from the English position; for the woods on the slopes and in the valley are of later growth. Cromwell, in the afternoon of the 2nd, going with Lambert to Lord Roxburgh's house, at Broxmouth, observed a great change in the disposition of the Scotch army. The whole of it was in motion; the right wing of cavalry (which had been on the lower ground all day), was edging down towards the sea, and most of their left wing coming down from the steep hill-slopes to take its place; the main body of foot and artillery were also moving in the same direction, "shogging" (as Cromwell says) much to the right. The effect of this manœuvre was that the Scotch line, when arranged in battalia, would face west instead of north-west, and would be on the flat ground instead of the slope; and, moreover, that their left would be confined between the brook and the hill in a place where it could not act freely. If Cromwell could get the passage of the burn from them, the battle was his; for disparity of numbers seldom troubled him much. He saw all this at a glance, and pointed it out to Lambert, who "immediately replied that he had thought to

have said the same thing." "Then," said Cromwell, "the Lord hath delivered them into my hand." They called for Monk, who heartily concurred, saying, "They have hills and number, we have despair to make our men fight." Some others of the colonels agreed, and Monk was ordered to "draw the design of the fight and embattle the army."

A council of war was held at nine o'clock that night. It was agreed that the attack should be at dawn, which at that time of the year is about four o'clock. The soldiers begged that Lambert might lead them, and the General gladly consented, appointing Fleetwood, Whalley, and Monk as his subordinates.

So the night passed, "very rainy and tempestuous," with wind and gusty storms. The English had a few tents; the Scots, who had none, sheltered themselves as they could in the shocks of corn, some of which was cut, some still standing. Much prayer was said in both armies through the long hours of suspense. The Scots, secure that nothing could be done till the morning, "put out their matches," and waited for the dawn. "Towards morning," writes Captain Hodgson, a Yorkshire man of Lambert's regiment, "we were ordered to march down to Roxburgh House, all the whole army, neither regarding tents or baggage; and as our regiment was marching in the head of the horse, a cornet was at prayer in the night, and I appointed one of my officers to take my place.



. . . I was satisfied deliverance was at hand, and coming to my command did encourage the poor weak soldiers, which did much affect them. . . . The day broke, and we in disorder, and the Major-General (Lambert) a-waiting, being ordering the guns. The General was impatient; the Scots a-preparing to make the attempt upon us, sounding a trumpet; but soon desisted." Lambert came up and ordered part of the army to march behind Roxburgh House towards the sea, and to fall upon the enemy's right flank. Meanwhile the English horse charged across the burn with the word, "The Lord of Hosts," and the roar of the great guns on both sides. The Scots were stronger at the pass, having both infantry and the advantage of the ground, and "there was a very hot dispute at sword's point" between the horse of the two armies. The Scots lancers were forced back across the burn; they rallied, horse and foot, and, pressing forward "through storms of hail and streams of blood," charged the enemy; at the same time the regiments which had crossed the burn lower down fell upon their right flank. The Scots were not beaten yet, "though at push of pike and butt-end of the musket, till a troop of our horse charged from one end to another of them," "through the bodies of the enemy's horse and of their foot," breaking them "through and through." This hot dispute had lasted less than an hour. There was no more fighting. The right wing of the Scots cavalry rode over their own foot in headlong

flight; the left wing, nearly a mile off, fled, "not having stricken one stroke." "Horse and foot," says Hodgson, "were engaged all over the field, and the Scots all in confusion. And the sun appearing upon the sea, I heard Nol say, 'Now let God arise, and His enemies shall be scattered;' and he following us as we slowly marched, I heard him say, 'I profess they run!' and then was the Scots army all in disorder, and running both right wing and left and main battle. They had routed one another after we had done their work on the right wing . . . and so the foot threw down their arms and fled towards Dunbar, our pinfold, and there they were surrounded and taken. The horse fled what way they could get; ours pursued towards Haddington, and the General made a halt and sung the 117th Psalm," both to give thanks for his victory, and to give his men time to "gather for the chase." "Their word (says one account) was, 'For the Covenant of Faith;' ours, 'The Lord of Hosts;' and indeed this is the Lord of Hosts' own doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes. The Lord of Hosts was above the Covenant."

The result of the battle was the total wreck and destruction of the Scotch army. Three thousand were slain on the field of battle; others, an unknown number, cut down along eight miles of road; nearly 10,000 were taken prisoners, of whom nearly half were "pitifully slashed and mangled;" the whole of their baggage and train, all their

artillery, great and small, brass, iron, and leather, fell into the hands of the English, with 15,000 stand of arms "left behind," and 200 and more colours to be hung up in Westminster Hall. Such were the results to the Scotch, whilst on the English side not twenty men were lost. "Surely it's probable the Kirk has done their do," wrote Oliver, the day after the battle. For the Kirk party, and their "King and Covenant" platform, it was hopeless defeat; for Cromwell, the assurance of success in whatever he designed. Henceforward the 3rd of September was his fortunate day; a day of omens and providences not to be thought lightly of.

Cromwell's clear and vigorous despatch was written on the 4th September. He "improves" the occasion in the same manner as after Marston. "It would do you good to see and hear our poor foot to go up and down making their boast of God. . . . We that serve you beg of you not to own us, but God alone; we pray you, own His people more and more, for they are the chariots and horsemen of Israel. Disown yourselves, but own your authority, and improve it to curb the proud and the insolent, such as would disturb the tranquillity of England, though under what specious pretences soever. "Relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners in England, be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions, and if there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth."

These political maxims come strangely in the heel of such stormy deliverances and providences. Cromwell never lost his cool head, even when most stormy, and doubtless he had a politic meaning in writing as he did. And both friends and enemies might read between the lines of the letter. Ludlow tells us that "the victory itself was not more welcome to him than the contents of the General's letter to the Parliament," and takes note particularly of the passage about a "Commonwealth." On the other hand, the Presbyterians might see that they had to deal with a man who had forgotten nothing of what the Army had done in 1647, and had the power and the will to bring to effect what he thought was good for England.

The day after the battle Cromwell sent Lambert with seven regiments to Edinburgh, proposing to follow himself immediately. "We are put to exceeding trouble," he writes, "though it be an effect of abundant mercy, with the numerousness of our prisoners. Having so few hands, so many sick . . . we have been constrained, even out of Christianity, humanity, and the forementioned necessity" (of striking quick, and following up the victory), "to dismiss between 4,000 and 5,000 prisoners, almost starved, sick, and wounded."

History tells little about these results of victory. It forgets almost the whole population of Wexford dead of the plague in these very months, and the miserable fate of these poor deluded Scots, driven along "like turkeys" by the English soldiers,

"cursing their King and clergy;" then huddled away, 5,100 of them, to Morpeth, Berwick, and Newcastle. In their hunger and rage, after eight days' fast, they tore up a garden full of "raw cabbages, leaves, and roots," and so sickening, fell down by the wayside in great numbers, and died there, or were "knocked on the head" by the officers. At Durham what remained of them (some 3,000) were shut up in the Cathedral; and if they were not looked after, orders were at least given that they should be—coals, pottage, straw to lie upon served out to them, "never the like care taken for any such number of prisoners in England." Notwithstanding this they rotted and died like sheep; some even were killed by one another, robbing and murdering for the sake of clothes or money ("for they were exceeding cruel one towards another"): a horrible scene in St. Cuthbert's Church, which still bears traces of their despair and fury.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### After Dunbar.

CROMWELL meanwhile pursued his glorious march to Edinburgh, which with its harbour, Leith, surrendered. The castle still held out under its Governor, Dundas, son-in-law of Leven. Cromwell ordered the head of Montrose to be taken down from the Tolbooth and honourably buried—a courtesy ill-requited in 1660 by Montrose's King.

The Scotch commanders tried to rally at Stirling. It was not easy; for their army was destroyed, and their cause was becoming discredited. No nation will long submit to be ruled by its clergy. The "Kirk Commission" and the Puritan Government had "done their do," and the young King did not disguise his amusement and satisfaction at the event. He was now at St. Johnston's (Perth), for the present keeping to Argyle and his party (the moderate Presbyterians), who were the Government so far as government existed, and the army leaders so far as an army existed.

Not even the beating they got at Dunbar could cure the Scots of their inveterate habit of splitting up into three factions. Besides the Kirk or Government party, the other two parties were the Malignants, Cavaliers, Engagers, Resolutioners, Charles's natural allies, gathering force in the Highlands under Middleton, Huntly, Athol, and Hamilton; and the extreme Covenanters of the genuine Scotch Puritan type, who thought that all dealing with Charles Stuart was of the nature of sin, and yet would not join with the invaders. These were called the Western Whigs, and their range of action was in the Lowlands, south of Glasgow.

The Western Whigs were at first courted by the Kirk at Stirling, and Charles was given to understand that strictness was expected of him. His Court must be purified; he must part with his "ungodly" followers, "Malignants and profane men," Englishmen and Cavaliers. Twenty-two of them were dismissed. Charles could bear it no longer. He fairly ran away to the Highlands behind Perth, and though he was caught and persuaded to return, he returned in a better position than before, verifying Cromwell's prophecy on the 4th of September: "I believe their King will set up upon his own score now, wherein he will find many friends." This flight of Charles's is called the "Start," and introduces a new act of the history of Scotland, to which we shall have to recur in connection with the campaign of 1651.

Cromwell paid a visit to Stirling, but found the castle there too strong to assault, and marched back without delay to Edinburgh, where Governor Dundas held the castle with provisions for fifteen months.

The castle could not be taken except by regular approaches, and the work had to be done by mining, no battering with guns being sufficient to reduce the place. The people began to get reconciled to the English invaders; finding that they did not burn houses or cut off the hands of children, they began to come in to market, and even attended the great church when Cromwell's chaplain preached, and "expressed much affection to the doctrine preached there." The nation was weary of war; and Cromwell's letter of the 9th of October, asking for "satisfaction and security," and a lasting and durable peace, had the good wishes of the common people. As Cromwell's trumpeter went through Stirling with the letter, the people stopped him, crying "Peace, peace!" But peace was not to be had. The letter, after long debate, received no present answer, and Cromwell expressed his belief that "the Lord had delivered them up to blindness and senselessness . . . and would break their pride and confound all their devices against his chosen people."

The Western Whigs requiring more attention, the army marched to Glasgow, where Cromwell spent a Sunday. "A Scots minister, Zachary



Boyd, railed foully against the General and his army, and though many soldiers heard it, yet no violence was offered to him." Probably other divines did the same. One of them, Durham by name, attacked Cromwell to his face in St. Mungo's, and one of his officers (so goes the story) wished to interfere; but the General stopped him, saying, "Let him alone; he is one fool, and you are another;" and the next day had a long and friendly talk with the minister.

Nothing was to be done with Colonels Kerr and Strahan, and the Western Army, and the end of the business was, that Lambert and Whalley beat them at Hamilton (1st December) with the loss of half-a-dozen men; killed one hundred of them, took many prisoners, among them Colonel Kerr himself, and so "shattered the whole party," driving them "in companies of sixteen or eighteen" all the county over.

The result of this break up of the Western faction was that the Committee of Estates repealed the "Act of Classes," by which Malignants and Engagers had been excluded, and admitted Charles's best friends to fight for him. The King's party henceforward grew stronger, much to the content of Cromwell, who found "more satisfaction in having to deal with men of this stamp than others," and preferred open enemies to "hypocritical shufflers" trying to reconcile Stuart and Covenant.

Cromwell was now master of the whole country south of the Firths of Forth and Clyde, with the

exception of Edinburgh Castle, which was summoned on the 12th of December, and surrendered on Christmas Eve, not without some suspicion of "silver bullets;" for the imputation of bribery and intrigue attended all Cromwell's actions, and even at Dunbar there was talk of English gold. It is more likely that the fear of what might happen to the city influenced the Governor; for during these weeks of occupation Holyrood Palace was nearly burnt down by the carelessness of some English soldiers, and more than one church was "dung down and brint to ashes."

The army went into winter quarters at Edinburgh, Cromwell, as before, occupying Lord Moray's house, still standing near the lower end of the Canongate.

Meanwhile, in England the Parliament and Council had been at their usual work, good and bad. They did not fix a term for their own sitting, and they continued to molest "delinquents" with grievous fines and confiscations. But they gave order that the laws of England should be written in English. They received foreign ambassadors with great dignity and ceremony, and by the voice of Blake's cannon let it be known that England had no mind to be forgotten. In Ireland the same horrible ravaging and man-hunting as before went on in the name of religion, under Ireton and Ludlow, who were worthy of better work in the Lord's vineyard.

A few letters of Cromwell belonging to this

winter spent in Scotland have been preserved. In one he says :

"I was not satisfied with your last speech to me about Empson, 'that he was a better preacher than fighter or soldier,' or words to that effect. Truly I think he that prays and preaches best will fight best."

In another he tries, with what looks like genuine modesty, to decline the honour of having his own "effigies" on the medal which was to be struck in memory of the victory of Dunbar, and to beg that instead of his own likeness, there may be represented the Parliament, and "on the other side, an army with this inscription over the head of it, *The Lord of Hosts*, which was our word that day." He does not, however, absolutely refuse the honour, nor was it his duty or his interest to be over-modest. He accepted in much the same manner the Chancellorship of Oxford, which was offered by the reformed University, promising his prayers for the increase of "that seed and stock of piety and learning so marvellously springing up" in Oxford, until he can "personally serve" them to the extent of his "poor abilities and interests."

We may note in connection with Cromwell's Chancellorship of Oxford, that he showed his interest in education by recommending to Parliament a petition from Durham, that the houses of the late Dean and Chapter there "might be converted into a College or School of Literature." The design took effect during the Protectorate;

but the College established by Cromwell's Ordinance came to an end at the Restoration; to be revived in our own time as the "University of Durham," which may in some sort reckon Cromwell as its first founder.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### Gloucester.

ON the 1st of January, 1651, Charles II. was crowned King of Scotland at Scone with great splendour. He assumed to himself the place of Captain-General of the Scotch forces, having under him the Duke of Hamilton, David Lesley, Middleton, and Massey, who not many years before had held Gloucester against Charles I. The Scots were "growing into an interest purely Royal and Malignant," and the "conscientious" party were retiring from public business and leaving the King to manage his own affairs. The Kirk had "done its do."

On the 4th of February the English army marched towards Stirling as far as Linlithgow and Falkirk. The weather was "so tempestuous with wind, hail, snow, and rain," that the only thing to be done was to come back again to headquarters. This abortive march is only worth recording because it was the cause of an illness which gave the General's friends the greatest anxiety. A violent ague and fever, with three

relapses, held him almost inactive for four months, and hindered the settlement of Scotland. He writes (24th March): "I thought I should have died of this fit of sickness, but the Lord seemeth to dispose otherwise;" and on the 3rd of June, after the last and sharpest relapse (in which he had had five ague-fits between Friday and Monday) he wrote as follows: "I shall not need to repeat the extremity of my last sickness. It was so violent that indeed my nature was not able to bear the weight thereof; but the Lord was pleased to deliver me beyond expectation, and to give me cause to say once more, He hath plucked me out of the grave." A letter from Edinburgh (20th May) says: "This is the third relapse since his first great sickness, which was contracted by a winter's march. My lord is not sensible that he is grown an old man."

Two physicians were sent down from London, Doctors Wright and Bates, travelling in Fairfax's coach. "But the Lord Himself hath" (before their coming, blessed be His name) "been his Physician, and said unto him *Live!*" He was about again in May and June; but his constitution, never healthy, was broken by this illness, and he enjoyed but little robust health in the seven years of care and labour which remained to him.

It was in the month of May that Cromwell, on his way from Glasgow to Edinburgh, happened to stop at the house of a Royalist gentleman, Sir Walter Stewart, Laird of Allertoun. "There

was none to entertain him but the lady and Sir Walter's sickly son. The good woman was as much for the King and the Royal Family as her husband; but she offered the General the civilities of her house, and a glass of canary was presented. The General observed the forms of those times (I have it on good authority), and he asked for a blessing in a long pathetic grace before the cup went round. . . . He was pleased to say his mother was a Stewart's daughter, and he had a relation to the name. All passed easy; and our James, being a lad of ten years, came so near as to handle the hilt of one of the swords, upon which Oliver stroked his head, saying, 'You are my little captain,' and this was all the commission our 'Captain of Allertoun' ever had. . . . The General was so humane, when he saw the young gentleman so maigre and indisposed, he said, 'Changing the climate might do good, and the South of France, Montpellier, was the place.' . . . The lady had been a strenuous Royalist, and her son a captain in command at Dunbar, yet upon this interview with the General she abated much of her zeal. She said she was sure Cromwell was one who feared God, and had that fear in him, and the true interest of religion at heart." The story, in the view it gives of the kindly and courteous side of Cromwell's character, is worth many of those anecdotes which, whether true or false, show him only as the grim fanatic and iron soldier.

Cromwell took the field again in the early part of June. New designs of the King of Scots were rumoured or guessed in the English camp. "'Tis very probable," writes Lambert, "they intend for England . . . our intelligence says that necessity doth drive them out of their camp at Stirling, and there was a huge mutiny amongst their soldiers for want of provisions." Cromwell too had his plans for the campaign, and moved again towards Stirling, hoping to cut off the enemy from his supplies in the North. It was necessary, but very difficult, to get at the Scotch army, settled as it was between Stirling and Falkirk, on the Torwood Hill, famous in Scottish history; for Lesley had returned to his old tactics, and would not risk a battle. The summer was ripe, and the English army could not afford to wait for another winter campaign. An attack from the south having failed, Cromwell determined to turn the Royal position on its left flank; and about the middle of July sent Lambert across the Firth at Queensferry into Fifeshire. A battle fought at Inverkeithing (18th July) gave Lambert possession of the ground, with very heavy loss to the Scots; and there, as afterwards at Worcester and Cullo-den, the Highlanders won glory by their Spartan valour, "the whole name of Maclean," to the number of five hundred, being destroyed. "This is an unspeakable mercy. . . . We can truly say we were gone as far as we could in our counsel and action, and we did say one to another we



knew not what to do." So Cromwell wrote on Monday, the 21st of July. In the course of the next ten days he marched to Stirling; but "finding the works there not advisable to attempt, resolved to march to Queensferry, and there to ship over so much of the army as might (hopefully) be master of the field in Fife." His object was to cut off the enemy's victual. "They may expect none out of the North when once our army shall interpose between them and St. Johnston." Some "thirteen or fourteen thousand horse and foot" were now on the north side of the "river," as Cromwell calls the Firth of Forth, and already "began to fall sick through the wet weather;" they were short of arms and armour, saddles, spades, and above all money. Cromwell wrote for all this, and for more men. He would not then or at any time risk his chances shorthanded, and he knew from the former year's experience how quickly an army melts away when sickness has once set in.

Cromwell's manœuvre forced the King's hand, and drove him to action. He had not an army fit to fight Cromwell, and could draw no more supplies from the Northern Counties, whilst the English fleet prevented all succour from abroad. But as the bulk of the English army was in Fife behind him, the road to England was clear. Cromwell had not enough troops to divide his forces, or he would have left part of his army to cut their line of march; for the enemy's action,

though sudden, was neither unexpected nor (as Cromwell's letters show) unwelcome. "When England," he writes on the 4th of August, "was much more unsteady than now, and when a much more considerable army of theirs, unfoiled, invaded you, and we had but a weak force to make resistance at Preston, upon deliberate advice we chose rather to put ourselves between their army and Scotland; and how God succeeded that is not well to be forgotten. *This* is not out of choice on our part, but by some kind of necessity, and it is to be hoped will have the like issue."

The young King's madcap adventures now began. Success was impossible; but the haphazard chivalrous Cavalier spirit never showed itself more finely than in this desperate attempt to take the bull by the horns. Trusting to the loyalty of the Western Counties, Charles chose his line of march by Carlisle, Lancashire, and Shropshire. For once taught by example and experience, the Royalist leaders kept their men in strict discipline, and prevented those excesses which had made the armies of Charles I. as terrible to their friends as to their enemies. "I dare say," says Lauderdale (now a good Cavalier), "we have not taken the worth of sixpence." Harrison was on the Border waiting for them. Fairfax, with the Yorkshire forces, lay heavy on their left flank, whilst recruits poured in from all the Midland Counties, and Lambert was pressing close on their rear with all the English cavalry, "jogging on,"

he says, "as fast as we can towards England." A short skirmish took place at Warrington Bridge, held by volunteer forces out of Cheshire, in which the Scots, led gallantly by the King, "gained the pass," crying as they charged, "Oh you rogues, we will be with you before your Cromwell comes!" This was their only success. The Earl of Derby came over from the Isle of Man, hoping to raise Lancashire for the King; but his troops were cut to pieces and his colours taken by Robert Lilburne at Wigan, and he himself was wounded and escaped with difficulty. Everything went ill. The English got all the recruits they wanted, and more; but the King's army lost by desertion from the first, and whenever a Royal trooper appeared the country people fled, "driving away their cattle and carrying away their goods." They had some experience of the hungriness of a Scotch army, and looked upon the Scots, even when led by the King, as aliens and enemies. The Parliament also had passed an Act, declaring "that it should be death to give any intelligence or assistance" to Charles Stuart and his party of "fugitives." The King was "much cast down that his subjects came in no faster to him," whilst his old soldiers fell away. What some of his followers thought is well shown by a letter from the Duke of Hamilton, dated from Penrith, 8th August:

"DEAR WILL,—The last thing I did was to drink your health with Lord Thomas, Dan O'Neal, and Lauderdale, who are now all laughing at the ridiculous-

ness of our condition. We have quitted Scotland, being scarce able to maintain it; and yet we grasp at all, and nothing but all will satisfy us, or to lose all. I confess I cannot tell you whether our hopes or fears are greatest; but we have one stout argument, *despair*; for we must now either stoutly fight it or die."

The King was proclaimed at Carlisle, and at all the towns through which he passed. It was expected that he would make for London; but the storm gathering from the east made that attempt desperate. By the 21st of August the army had reached the borders of Shropshire, worn out by the heat of the weather and their three weeks' march; some twelve or thirteen thousand of them, "weak horse and very sickly foot, miserably ragged," and so weary of their adventure, that "their King was found with cap in hand desiring them yet a little longer to stick to him." At Shrewsbury they left the London road, hostile with gathering militia, and turned their march southward to Worcester, a town strong by its position at the junction of the Severn and the Teme, and capable of further strengthening, in a county too where the gentry were loyal, or reputed to be so. It was necessary to rest; for the Scots were ready to mutiny, and Lesley, the General, was becoming more and more "sad and melancholy," thinking (as he told the King) that "the army, how well soever it looked, would not fight." Fight however they must, "or die." If they were beaten from Worcester they might be able to

carry on the war in a desultory manner in the Welsh marches. If by some miracle they broke through the iron crescent of the English, closing in upon them from east and north, the good affection of Worcester might spread to other towns, and the King enjoy his own again.

Worcester lies on the east side of the Severn, there running nearly south, about a mile above the spot where the Teme, flowing silently from the west, joins its waters with the larger stream. Close to the Severn stands the Cathedral, its western front looking out upon a river-terrace some sixty feet high. The walls formed three sides of an irregular oblong, of which the river was the fourth and western side. At the south-eastern angle, but outside the walls, was a steep knoll, crowned by a strong work called Fort Royal. Near the same angle the walls were pierced by a fortified gateway, called Sidbury Gate, through which ran northwards the main street of the town.

To the south-east of the city, its face almost parallel with the river and the walls, is a wooded height, called Red Hill, which commands at short range the whole front of the walls, and extends for some distance to the south, coming down very near the Severn opposite the mouth of the Teme. To the west of the Severn, and joined to the city by a bridge a quarter of a mile north of the Cathedral, is the straggling suburb of St. John's. It lies in a space of level ground, with scattered

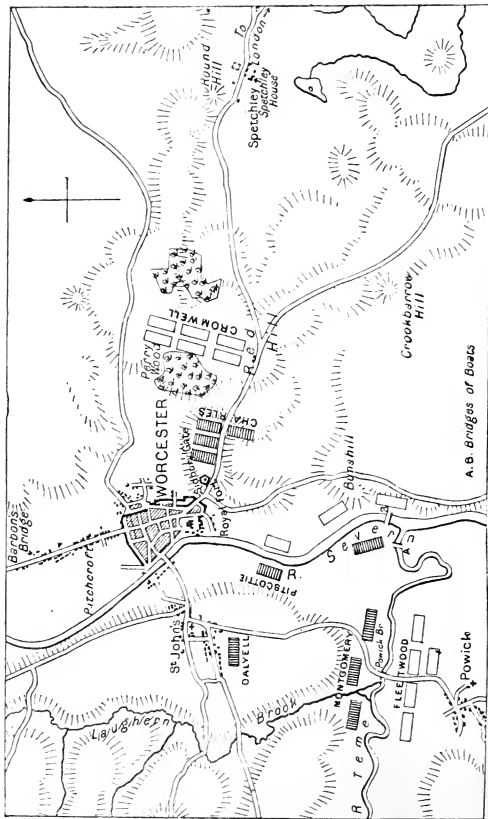
cottages, orchards, and hop-gardens, in the right angle formed by the junction of the two rivers. A mile west up the Teme, which flows nearly due east, is Powick Bridge. It lies on the road leading from Worcester to Powick village, half a mile south of the Teme. The view is little changed from that which lay under the eyes of the King and his officers as they held anxious counsel on the Cathedral Tower. To the east and south-east the line of Red Hill slopes from the town, and the Severn runs south through open meadows full of cattle. North and west the prospect ranges over enclosed fields, level on the west, ending northward in distant hills. High above this rustic scene of fruit trees, and hedgerows, and red-tiled roofs, rises the green line of the Malvern Hills, seven miles distant, the principal feature of the landscape, standing out, a mountainous outline, in the clear September air against the western sky. The town itself, though much altered, has many houses which must have been standing in 1651, and the general direction of the streets is what it was then.

Charles arrived at Worcester on the 22nd of August, the same day on which his father set up his Royal Standard in wind and rain at Nottingham nine years before. The King, formally proclaimed, presented with the city keys, and complimented by the Mayor, took up his lodging at a house, still standing, called the Commandery. His army were quartered partly in the city, and

along the works of defence to the east; but the main body lay encamped in a leaguer on the west side of the Severn, in the suburb of St. John's, with detachments at Powick and at Upton, nine miles down the Severn. Upton Bridge was broken. The works of Worcester were "fortified beyond imagination;" the houses in the suburbs fired, nothing neglected to strengthen the royal position against the daily expected arrival of Cromwell and his thousands.

For though Charles had marched 300 miles in three weeks, Cromwell had marched fast too. He broke up from Perth immediately after its surrender on the 3rd of August, crossed the Border on the 8th; then moved on by Newcastle, Doncaster, Mansfield, and Coventry, till he joined Lambert, Fleetwood, and Harrison at Warwick on the 24th; and at Keynton, near the scene of Edgehill fight, held a council of war, at which it was decided to march straight upon Worcester and to cut off the enemy from all hope of reaching London; and also, if possible, to attack his position from both sides of the Severn, and bring the campaign to a decisive end.

Cromwell's army moved in two detachments from Evesham. The Lord-General himself arrived in front of Worcester early on the 28th of August, and at once began to fortify himself on Red Hill, and plant batteries against the town. The other detachment, under Fleetwood, marched the same morning down the Severn to Upton, to secure the bridge there. It was broken down;



WORCESTER, SEPT. 3RD, 1651.



but there was a beam of timber that reached from one arch to another; and some of Lambert's troopers dismounting, "rid over on this wooden Pegasus," and got possession of a church near the bridge. There was some sharp fighting at the church, the Scots firing their pistols, and thrusting their swords in at the windows. Massey, the principal commander of the Royalists, was wounded in the hand, and had his horse shot under him. Reinforcements came up, "three hundred of Cobbett's foot riding behind as many troopers." Lambert and Major-General Deane had repaired the bridge as well as they could, working with their own hands; and, partly by the bridge, and partly by swimming, the fresh troops got across and established themselves firmly on the western side of Severn.

From the 28th of August to the 3rd of September nothing decisive was done on either side. The Scots drew in their outlying troops; the English made their preparations for attacking the town. Cromwell "played pell-mell into the city" with his great guns, and the Royal army made more than one vigorous sortie, but refused battle when Cromwell drew out his army on the 29th.

The Royalists, who were hoping for reinforcements from Lancashire, were further discouraged by the arrival of Lord Derby, on Sunday, the 31st of August, wounded and almost alone, bringing the news of his own defeat at Wigan, and the end of all hope of succour from the North. The towns-

people were "much distracted," and began to curse the Cavaliers, and wish they had not deserted the Parliament's cause.

On Wednesday morning, the 3rd of September, the English works being now advanced to within "half-musket shot" of the city walls, Fleetwood being in command of twelve thousand men at Upton, on the west side of the Severn, and the Scots army lying in the fields between Worcester and Powick Bridge, and holding the bridge (partly broken down) in force, Cromwell determined to make his grand attack. It was Dunbar day, and it may be doubted whether Cromwell did not guide the "Providence" which ordained that the Scots should again meet the English army on that fatal anniversary. The word was the same as at Dunbar—"The Lord of Hosts."

Before sunrise on the morning of the 3rd, Fleetwood, the Lieutenant-General, was moving troops from Upton towards Teme mouth, whilst Cromwell sent about a thousand men from his camp on Redhill to Bunshill, opposite the same point on the east side of the Severn, with poles and planks, and some cannon. The hills here come close down to the river, which is about a hundred yards wide. Some hindrances on the way delayed Fleetwood's march, and it was not till one o'clock that he was able to begin his attack on Powick, on the south side of the Teme, which was held as an advanced post to protect the bridge. He brought up with him twenty "great boats,"

laden with planks and other material for building bridges. When the boats arrived no time was lost in building a bridge across the Severn, and another "within pistol shot of it," over the Teme. Meanwhile the "dispute was going on very hot" between Montgomery and Fleetwood at Powick.

The King held a council of his officers on the Cathedral tower, which commands a view of the whole ground. There (says tradition) Lesley spoke his mind so freely that some of the young Cavalier officers tripped up the old Scot's heels, or pushed him down the narrow newel staircase which leads from the tower to the church floor. Whether this be true or not, Lesley is accused of having sulked through the remainder of the day, and not to have done his best to help the King in his need with the two thousand horse under his command.

The bridges were finished in less than an hour, with no opposition from the Royal army, except from a body of three hundred Highlanders, under Pitscottie, who were cut to pieces; and cavalry and infantry came to the angle between the rivers, thronging over the Severn and the Teme as fast as they could be moved. The Lord-General "did lead the van in person, and was the first that set foot on the enemy's ground," leaving Lambert in command of the troops on the east side. It was now nearly three o'clock, and Charles, who from the Cathedral tower perceived the danger, and feared that Cromwell would get between the town

and his forces at Powick, rode hastily to that point, to order his men to take ground to the left, and operate against the enemy's left flank and front. The hedges were lined with musketeers all the way from Powick bridge to the Severn, and a desperate contest began, the Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, keeping up a stubborn fight at push of pike from hedge to hedge, forced back by superior numbers, but having the advantage of enclosed ground, in which cavalry could not act freely. Cromwell sent for more and more troops from the eastern bank, till Lambert would send no more, fearing to weaken the position on Red Hill.

The Royal army, pushed back to its entrenchments, and retiring from Powick bridge, was able to concentrate its forces and fall back leisurely into the city, fighting for every step up to the drawbridge and city gate. At this moment the face of the battle was changed. The King or his officers, seeing that the bulk of the English army was now on the western side of the Severn, in the angle formed by the two rivers, whilst a large part of their own army had not stirred out of the town, formed the design of falling upon the English camp, and the forces left on the eastern bank; so as to cut them in pieces before their comrades could get over the bridge of boats to help them. The Scotch troops were passed as quickly as possible through the city to its south-eastern angle; and from Sidbury Gate, Friar Gate,

and Frog Gate they assaulted the English reserve on Red Hill, which consisted for the most part of new levies of militia; sallying forth "in great bodies," horse and foot, with desperate courage. The King, at the head of his cavalry, "behaved very gallantly," and "broke a regiment of foot, and forced back a considerable body of their horse." The English began to waver under their fierce attack. It was getting late in the September afternoon; the Malvern Hills were changing from green to blue against the evening sky, and the setting sun blazed in the great west window of the Cathedral; and yet, with odds two to one, the battle was neither lost nor gained. As soon as the new attack was observed, Cromwell galloped across to the left bank of the Severn, followed by Desborough's horse and Cobbett's regiment of foot, who came rattling over the bridge of boats, and soon restored the fortune of the day, driving the Royalists from their advantages with much loss, and as fresh troops came pouring in across the bridge, forced them back to the gates, disputing every inch of the way. Now was the time for Lesley to charge with his two thousand Scots horse; but he was not to be found, and no effective rally could be made. Outside of Sidbury Gate stood the Fort Royal, strongly garrisoned by the Scottish troops. Some of the English troops followed the enemy up to Sidbury Gate, others turned aside to attack the fort on their right. It was nearly dark, after two or three hours of "sharp dispute." In

the darkening evening, lighted by the flashes of "great and small shot," Cromwell rode up to Fort Royal, "exceedingly hazarding himself, and riding up and down in the midst of the fire," and summoned the garrison. They would have no quarter, and "returned no answer but shot." The word was then given to storm; the Essex Volunteers, who had been "ready to fall on their face at the sound of the cannon a day before," now were first into the fort, and in honour of their valour Cromwell ordered the Essex colours to be planted on its walls. All who were in the fort were put to the sword. By eight o'clock, nearly two hours after sunset, Sidbury Gate was forced, the English "entering at the enemy's heels." Let loose in the town, they fought from street to street, and killed, according to the law or license of war, all they found in arms, and many innocent townspeople as well; "which could not," says Cromwell, "at that time possibly be prevented in the fury and heat of the battle." Throughout the night the sack and plunder of the town went on: another Drogheda, but without the ugly addition of religious ferocity.

All the Scots that could escape, except 1,300, who got into a fort on the Castle Hill, to the south of the town, made their way out of St. Martin's Gate to the north, towards home, with little hope of reaching it. But few escaped entirely. Of 15,000 present at the battle, 3,000 fell in the engagement, and at least 10,000 were

taken prisoners. These were marched in droves to London, and there sold for slaves to be sent to Barbadoes. Of the rest, some few may have straggled home; but by far the greater number, betrayed by their Scotch "Sibboleth," were taken prisoners or killed without mercy. "We had no guides," says a Cavalier who rode nearly to Preston, in Lancashire, and was taken at last, "so we often lost our way. . . . We were so closely pursued in the day by the army and garrison forces, and in the night by the country, that from the time we came out of Worcester" (Wednesday evening) "till Friday in the evening, that I was taken prisoner, I nor my horse never rested. Our body consisted of 3,000. In the day we often faced the enemy, and beat their little parties back to their main body; but still those of us whose horses tired or were shot were lost, unless they could run as fast as we rode. In the night we kept close together, yet some fell asleep on their horses; or if their horses stayed behind, we might hear by their cries what the bloody country people were doing with them."

How the King got away is not exactly known. He did all that could be done to restore the day, and when all was lost is said to have gone about desperately, bidding his own men to kill him. In the scene of confusion which ensued, when Sidbury Gate was forced, no one cared to see what happened to another. David Lesley "rode up and down as one amazed . . . all things looked very

horrid; alarms in every part of the city . . . and we of the horse trampling one upon another, much readier to cut one another's throats than defend ourselves against the enemy." The King was nowhere to be found. It was believed that he was dead, and that "being very swart" his body had not been recognized among so many naked corpses, as the white bodies of Cavalier gentlemen had been picked out among the slain at Marston Moor. He had got safe away, however, and the story of his manifold recognitions and escapes during the next six weeks is the best comment that can be made on the attempt made by the Puritans—fruitless at last, though carried forcibly into action—to change the course of English history. Of the rest, Hamilton died of his wounds; Derby, wounded too, was brought home to Bolton, and beheaded on a scaffold made of the timbers of his own loyal house of Lathom; Cleveland, Lauderdale, and others were sent to London, and with them Lesley, to be shut up in the Tower, "drinking and roaring, when he can get it;" Middleton, also in the Tower, "melancholy mad;" Massey, who was reported to be dead of his wounds, was caught and sent to the Tower, but escaped and joined the King in France.

The wretched Scots prisoners were encamped on Hampstead Heath, and led thence in a pitiful triumph through Aldgate, Cheapside, and the Strand, to Westminster. "Sturdy, surly knaves," they seemed to be fit to be slaves for English-



men. But for the present the Londoners were compassionate, and gave them charity as they passed; "more money and good white bread" than they had seen in their lives before.

All power was now at Cromwell's feet. The glory of his achievement was "above his thoughts. . . . 'It is, for aught I know, a *crowning mercy*.'" Cromwell "gave, as was due, the glory of the action unto God." Yet there were not wanting observers who saw in his bearing something of an ominous regality, and thought "that Cromwell would make himself King."

Leaving the Golgotha of Worcester, hideous with naked corpses of men and rotting carcasses of horses, Cromwell, having given orders to dismantle the works, set out for London. He was greeted by Parliament and the City with all the honours which yet remained ungranted or could be repeated. The Speaker and the Lord Mayor met him with coaches and trumpeters, "a little beyond Acton," and the roads for four or five miles were lined with Londoners and country people come out to gaze on him. He avoided ostentation, "carrying himself with great affability and seeming humility," and chose to sit in the Speaker's coach, rather than to ride in on horseback, "to avoid the popularity and applause of the citizens." He gave a "horse and two Scots prisoners" to each of his entertainers as a present. Complimentary speeches, thanks in Parliament, dinners at Guildhall, followed, and a grant of

lands was given him, worth £4,000 a year, and Hampton Court for his residence.

Cromwell never fought another battle. "Pax quæritur bello" was the motto of the Commonwealth; but though he never led an army in the field again, thenceforward to the end of his life there was no peace for the great leader of the war.

## CHAPTER XX.

### *The Expulsion of the Long Parliament.*

IN the absence of Cromwell the Commons were in no hurry to give up their power, and the debates for a dissolution and a new election went on but slowly. The question of a dissolution was before the House the day after Cromwell returned to town; but it was not till the 18th of November that a vote was passed to fix a period for their continuance, and that period was fixed for November, 1654.

The conquest of Scotland had been perfected in England, and nothing was left but to complete the union of the two nations. This was done by Acts of the English Parliament, and conferences between Scots Commissioners and delegates from the Westminster Parliament, among whom Sir H. Vane was the most conspicuous member. Then followed seven years of prosperity, during which Scotland was strongly but peaceably governed; and her people, seeing that justice was done and religion countenanced, and that their worldly affairs prospered, were contented to bear the yoke which they

had put upon their own necks by their ill-advised attempts to impose their will on the stronger nation.

In Ireland the work of conquest was carried out effectively, but with remorseless cruelty. The "Tories," as the Irish rebels were called, were hunted by parties of English soldiers, and shot without mercy wherever they were found in arms, wandering over the country protected by the peasantry; robbing and killing whom they could, and then "pursued into bogs," and killed like sheep by fifties and hundreds. Some were burned alive, others smoked to death in caves, others flogged and hanged by dozens, till the whole country was conquered, and subjected to the full severity of the English yoke.

Ireton was the English commander. It is to his honour that he refused to receive the pension of £2,000 which was voted to him by Parliament; and when he died (26th November) he left a purer name for patriotism and unselfishness than any of the great soldiers who fought in the Parliament's quarrel.

Vane, the chief minister for naval affairs, had formed the design of uniting England and Holland into one Commonwealth. He saw that the commercial interests of the two nations were identical, and that they must either be partners or rivals. The national pride of the Dutch prevented this design, and it therefore became necessary to exalt the English trade at their

expense. A law was passed (August, 1651) by which the import of foreign goods to England was restricted to English ships. Hitherto the carrying trade had belonged chiefly to the Dutch, and this "Navigation Act" struck a fatal blow at their commercial prosperity.

No Navigation Act is now needed to protect the carrying trade of Britain. But at the time when it was passed the increase of custom to British ships so stimulated the enterprise of our sailors that the commercial power thus transferred to England was never lost; and though resting on a selfish policy, it was "perhaps," as Adam Smith says, "the wisest of all the commercial regulations of England." It led, as we shall see, to a war with Holland, which did as much for the military marine of England as the Act itself did for her merchant service.

There were other causes of offence between England and the United Provinces. Now that their trade was threatened they cared little to maintain the appearance of friendship. They sent ambassadors to remonstrate with Parliament on the subject of the Navigation Act, but could obtain no redress. Whilst the Dutch ambassadors were endeavouring to make peace the fleets were already at war, and Dutch and English sailors were flying red flags, and banging each other in the Downs.

At length (July, 1652) war was formally declared between the two Republics. Whether

England was right or wrong in the quarrel, she proved herself the stronger. The history of the war does not closely concern Cromwell, though the control of the latter part of it, and the settlement of peace in 1654, fell to him. It was conducted on both sides by sailors of fame—Blake, Dean, Monk, and Ayscough on our side; for the Dutch, Van Tromp and De Ruyter.

Cromwell's foreign policy when he became Protector was to make England, right or wrong, feared and respected; to claim all that could be claimed, and enforce all claims at the sword's point; a policy which was now being carried out vigorously and successfully by Vane and his colleagues.

The war was, as war must always be, a source of great expense; and in order to meet it heavy taxes had to be raised, and the partisans of the beaten cause had to suffer for it. The sale of delinquents' estates, of Church lands, of Cathedrals, their stonework, leads, and bells, went on as if it had but just begun.

This was not the way to heal the distractions of England. The first thing necessary was, that an amnesty should be proclaimed; a matter which Cromwell had much at heart, and which he pressed upon the attention of an unwilling Parliament; and the second, that some form of government should be set up which should command the allegiance of Englishmen as the old Monarchy of England had done.

Cromwell was always practical. He desired

nothing so much as the settlement of the nation, and he saw that for the present the chief power in the State was the Army, and himself at its head. He wished to bring the great question of settlement to a point as soon as possible, and was not at all disposed to wait till November, 1654.

In the autumn of 1651 Cromwell called a meeting of Members of Parliament, judges, and soldiers, to consider of the future government of the nation. So far as he revealed his own thought it was to the purpose, that "a mixed monarchical government" was that which suited the habits of England, her laws and institutions, better than a pure Republic. To whom then was the sovereign title to belong? Some said the King himself, or the Duke of York, if either of them would "come in to the Parliament;" or if this was impossible, as both of them had been declared public enemies, the late King's third son, Henry, Duke of Gloucester, might be set on the throne.

Cromwell's final words, if Whitelocke has truly reported them, were to the effect that to set either Charles or James over them would be "a business of more than ordinary difficulty; but that if it might be done with safety and preservation of our rights both as Englishmen and as Christians, a settlement with somewhat of monarchical power in it would be very effectual."

Whether Cromwell in fact pronounced these

words or not, they express his conviction, and he acted upon it consistently. This was, as the sequel proved, the practical view, and Cromwell was true to his nature in supporting it. The question was one which admitted of no peaceful solution. The Army had killed one King, and beaten another. The nation was in mourning for Charles I., and more than half of them would have restored Charles II. that very day if they had had the power. But the power was in the hand of the Army, and the Army was in the hand of Cromwell; and sooner or later that power must be confessed, and Army and Parliament must bend before it.

In the meantime the Rump was left alone to do its best for a settlement of the nation; and Cromwell, never in a hurry, was willing to lend a helping hand to keep down extravagancies in the Army, and trust to the new Representative to save the nation, with the help of his own strong right hand, for he never meant to abdicate. No man, "ambitious" or not, has ever held supreme power in times of revolution, and found a cheap and easy way to lay it down. Now, at any rate, he did not allow the Rump to consider itself either absolute or permanent; and, helped forward by his private influence, meetings were held, and an address presented to Parliament by the Army officers, in which the grievances of the country were set forth, and redress demanded in matters of law and religion, with a request that something might be done towards the settlement of future Parliaments. The



dissolution business was again brought up and debated, but nothing further done.

In November, 1651, "in a fair evening," Lord Commissioner Whitelocke "being walking in St. James's Park to refresh himself," Cromwell came up, and having saluted him "with more than ordinary courtesy," began a long and agitating conversation on the state of the country. He spoke of the "dangerous condition they were all in;" of parties in Parliament, and discontents in the Army; how the Members of Parliament had "engrossed all places of honour and profit to themselves and their friends," and cared nothing for those who had risked their lives and shed their blood for the country; whilst their injustice and partiality, and "the scandalous lives of some of the chief of them," brought them into common contempt. He argued that some power was wanting, "so full and so high as to restrain and keep things in better order," and that there was "little hopes of a good settlement to be made by them;" then suddenly asked, "What if a man should take upon him to be King?" Whitelocke, in some embarrassment, pointed out that Cromwell had in fact royal power, since he held absolute command of the Militia, and was listened to in all that he proposed or dissuaded in matters of State. Cromwell answered that the title of King was "so great and high, and so universally understood by the people of this nation," that men would be more willing to act under it than under

a Parliament and General, and that indeed by the Constitution of the country it might be lawfully obeyed, quoting a statute of Henry VII. much referred to at that time. Whitelocke, if his memory was correct, after hinting that the question was not so much who should be King, as whether there should be a King at all, advised Cromwell to restore the "King of Scots," after taking personal securities of him, and putting such limits to monarchical power as would secure spiritual and civil liberties. Here ended the conversation; Cromwell justly remarking that it was a matter of too high importance and dignity to be settled in a moment, and probably thinking that the blood of Charles I. lay impassably between him and Charles II., and moreover that to make him King would be to "have put into his hands all that we had engaged for, and all our security would have been a little piece of paper."

About the same time other conferences, "ten or twelve at least," were held with the same object of bringing some light out of the darkness of Parliamentary inaction. Cromwell and his officers pressed closer and closer the demand that Parliament should know its own mind, and declare both its own dissolution, and what power was to succeed it; whilst it became more clear that Parliament did not intend its own dissolution, but rather regarded itself as the nurse and mother of the Commonwealth, and the only safeguard against usurping power. It was a difficult situation. Sir

Henry Vane was the leader of the Republican party, and the only man who, in parliamentary ability, in courage, perseverance, and subtlety, could claim to be a rival to Cromwell. His plan was to diminish the number of the Army, partly for the public safety, partly to spare public money, and so have more to spend upon the Fleet, to reform abuses in religion, law, &c., and to frame a Bill by which the present government could give place to a "new Representative" to be chosen more fairly and reasonably than former Parliaments. Before this measure could be matured, he did not think it wise for the Long Parliament to surrender their powers.

Cromwell, whose activity in promoting the measures for amnesty and toleration showed him to be in earnest in endeavouring to heal past differences, employed all his influence to preparing the way for a new Parliament without losing hold of that power of directing the course of events which his command in the Army gave him. The Army was reduced soon after Worcester fight, from 50,000 to about 37,000 men, at the motion of Vane; who never let the matter rest, till in the following August a committee was appointed to consider further retrenchment: and the reductions had been continued "by advice of the General and officers of the Army," so that the Army at this time was little more than half as numerous as that which was on foot in 1651. This force, though below a war establishment, was sufficient

to hold in check all domestic opposition if commanded by a general who knew how to use it.

It seems clear that Cromwell had by this time conceived the idea of making himself King. He was in the conscious possession of more power than any other man or set of men in the kingdom. Foreigners as well as Englishmen addressed him (in Milton's words) as our "Chief of Men." His power rested on the Army; but the Army wished for a continuance of the Commonwealth, and here was his greatest difficulty. He was determined not to give up power till the government of the nation was in the hands of the "godly" or Independent party, whose head he must necessarily be. The points of difference between Cromwell and Vane were these: First, Vane would have left the election of the new Parliament to those, without exception, who throughout the country had upheld "the good Cause." Cromwell, believing that God's witness had been given to the Army, not to the Parliament or the nation, wished to appoint, by the authority of the Army, some thirty or forty delegates who should make reforms in the law and establish civil and religious liberty. Vane's plan was to continue the sitting Members and their Council of State as part of the new Parliament, and to admit only such new Members as they should approve. Cromwell was for a clean sweep of the old Parliament, and a new election, with due qualifications, according to the rules laid down by an assembly

of "Puritan notables," such as he himself called into existence in 1653. Vane trusted the people; Cromwell, knowing them better, did not, and knew that a Parliament elected by Vane's Bill would not continue himself in power. If this came to pass there would probably be another civil war, in which the Parliament would be inevitably drawn to favour the Stuarts, and the Army would have to coerce them. The result might be a Monarchy, with Cromwell as King, or a Republic, with Cromwell as President. In either case he considered himself set there as a Moses or Joshua to act for the maintenance of peace and order. It lay in his power to prevent a civil war, and this was his first duty, called as he was to his place, not by his own seeking, but by witnessings of Providence and "crowning mercies." Ambition and conviction worked together to one end, and the interest of the people of God, the rule of necessity, *Salus Populi*, and witnessing of Providence, combined to make him believe that he was acting uprightly in seeking his own power.

He now endeavoured to induce the Republican party to press on their own dissolution. Then, finding that Vane was more ready to dissolve than he had expected, and that the ground was being cut from under his feet, he changed his tactics, and complained that the dissolution was being pressed on too hastily, and without regard for proper security in the future. The Bill for the new Representative, he said, if passed, would put

all into the hands of the people, good and bad alike, and there would be no safeguard that the new representatives would not all consist of "Presbyterians and Neuters;" and of these he declared emphatically, not one should take part in the future elections "who had deserted this cause and interest." He would be no party to having "anybody so far set in the saddle . . . as to have all the rest of his brethren at mercy."

The quarrel rose higher and higher. At length, on the 19th of April, when Cromwell had made up his mind that the Parliament should be dissolved without the Bill for the new Representative, but with such security for the elections as his "Assembly of Notables" would give; and when Vane had made up his mind to pass the Bill and so dissolve, a conference was held between about twenty of the Parliamentary grandees and the officers of the Army, at which, after much talk had produced no result, it was agreed by some of the chief Parliamentary leaders "that they would endeavour to suspend further proceedings about their Bill" till the next afternoon, after another conference; it being then late at night, and the early-rising Members of Parliament being "weary."

It is doubtful whether Vane was present at this conference; in any case Vane had no power to promise that Parliament should not meet the next morning; and it is probable, if not certain, that the action taken by Whitelocke, Widdrington, and others, was without his knowledge or consent,

At all events, the next morning the House met at its usual hour. After what had passed the night before, Vane pressed on the work with greater urgency, advising Parliament to depart from the ordinary usage so far as to pass the Bill on paper, without waiting to have it engrossed on parchment; and (according to Cromwell's account) "leaving out all things relating to the due exercise of the qualifications" for electors and elected. It was an attempt to ignore power, and failed, as such attempts must always fail.

About the same time as Parliament met, the conversation of the previous evening was resumed at Cromwell's house. It was proposed that about forty Members of Parliament and Officers of the Army should be nominated by the Parliament to carry on the Government till a new Parliament should meet, and that the present Parliament should be forthwith dissolved.

Meanwhile the House had met, and proceeded to discuss the Bill. Notice of this was brought to Cromwell, who immediately broke up the conference and went down to the House. After listening to the debate for some time, he called to Major-General Harrison, and told him that he judged the Parliament ripe for a dissolution, and this to be the time of doing it. Harrison dissuaded him from so dangerous an action. Cromwell sat still for a quarter of an hour, till the question for passing the Bill was put. Then he said to Harrison, "This is the time. I must do it!" and

suddenly standing up, made a violent speech against the Parliament, upbraiding them with selfishness and ambition, and telling them "that the Lord had done with them, and had chosen other instruments for carrying on His work that were more worthy." Sir Peter Wentworth told him that his language was unparliamentary, and unbecoming in a servant of the Parliament. Cromwell answered that he was not to expect to hear parliamentary language from him, and then "stepped into the midst of the House," and said, "Come, come, I will put an end to your prating." Then, "walking up and down the House like a madman, and kicking the ground with his feet," he cried out, "You are no Parliament. I will put an end to your sitting. Call them in, call them in!" Thereupon Lieut.-Colonel Worsley, with two files of musketeers, entered the House. "Sir Henry Vane said aloud, 'This is not honest: yea, it is against morality and common honesty.' Then Cromwell fell a railing at him, crying out with a loud voice, "O Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane, the Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" Then, looking upon one of the Members, he said, "There sits a drunkard;" and giving much reviling language to others, he pointed to the Speaker, Lenthall, and said, "Fetch him down!" The Speaker refused to come down unless he were forced. "Sir," said Harrison, "I will lend you my hand," and so led him from the chair. Cromwell then pointed to the mace, and said, "What shall we do with this fool's bauble? Here, take it



away!" Then, turning to the Members of the House, he cried, "It is you that have forced me to this. I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work." He then ordered the guard to clear the House, took up the Act and put it under his cloak, commanded the doors to be locked up, and went away to Whitehall.

Thus was completed the second grand act of the life of Oliver Cromwell. "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" The first act led on necessarily to the other, if the chief actor was not willing to be the first among equals, but would set himself above all. In putting Charles I. to death Cromwell believed himself to be the minister of God's vengeance, and to be ridding the country of a faithless king and an implacable enemy. In setting himself thus above all that law and custom had ordained in England, he rested on dispensations and guidings of Providence, on the necessity ("the tyrant's plea") for keeping up the godly interest, and on the strong practical argument that the power was and must be his; and that the name of power had better be where power itself was. But the violent dissolution of the Long Parliament cannot be a doubtful measure. It was either a great act of justice or a crime. If it had established the nation in peace, and brought in a new era of prosperity for a regenerate and Puritan England, it would have been perhaps the greatest benefit that ever a liberator conferred on

his country. But it must be judged by the result ; and the whole history of the Commonwealth, glorious and conspicuous as Cromwell's government was, shows that Cromwell did but as other conquerors have done, in establishing his own personal power, and thereby making more certain than ever the degradation of his country when the time for a change should come. We can see no good reason why Cromwell should not have worked with Vane, Bradshaw, Martin, and his other old friends and allies, in confirming the Commonwealth, and gradually bringing the nation over to his side. To have done so would have been a noble work ; to have failed whilst endeavouring to establish justice and mercy would have been a noble endeavour ; and the experience of the Revolution of 1689 gives reason to believe that the nation might, under the guidance of Cromwell and his fellow Republicans, have forgotten the House of Stuart, and have seen the end of evil days, and the dawn of a better day than that which rose after seven years of arbitrary government and anarchy, followed by thirty years of sloth and corruption, when the Stuarts, trusted again in vain, were driven from the throne, and liberty slowly and painfully grew out of the ruins of despotism.

The pith of the matter is this : Vane and the Parliamentary Republicans mistrusted the Army, whilst Cromwell based his power upon the Army ; and therefore no reconciliation was possible where will and power were combined in one man.

Cromwell has told us himself that "not a dog barked" when the Rump was turned out of doors. His *de facto* government was indeed accepted by the Army generally, by the Fleet, and with more or less reluctance by the nation at large. It was felt that a confessed despotism was a better thing than a despotism unconfessed and at war with legality, and an Army and Parliament at variance; a state of things in which no settlement was possible. The Royalists rejoiced, thinking that their cause must profit by confusion. But the feeling of the soberer part of the nation was thus expressed by Scot, one of the chief Members of the Parliament. "It has been said (you say) that the Parliament went out, and no complaining in the streets nor enquiry after them. That is according to the company men keep. Men suit the letter to their lips. It is as men converse. I never met a zealous attestor of that cause, but lamented it; to see faith broken and somewhat else." The Rump was old, stale, and unpopular; but Cromwell's usurpation brought forward a new danger, which was feared more in proportion as its power was felt.

Cromwell lost no time in putting his plan into action. He published a Declaration setting forth the reasons for his *coup d'état*, accusing the late Parliament of a design to perpetuate themselves, and stating the necessity of putting a sudden end to the Act which, if it had been passed, was likely to deliver all their liberties into the hands of the

men whom they had vanquished in battle. The new government, he said, had been set up in order to settle the Commonwealth "on a foundation of justice and righteousness." Something too was said of a settlement which should cause the people "to forget monarchy, and, understanding their true election of successive Parliaments . . . to have the government settled upon a true basis, without hazard to this glorious Cause, or necessitating to keep up armies for the defence of the same."

The Lord-General established a Council of State, consisting of thirteen members; eight officers, besides himself, and four civilians. These, with the help of the Army Council, took the place of Parliament and Council of State for nine weeks. The administration of the Rump had been so able and incorrupt that the new governors had nothing to do but to follow their steps. They inherited a flourishing treasury (yet they thought it necessary to raise the monthly assessment from £70,000 to £120,000 again), a victorious Fleet, and the respect, if not the affection, of foreign nations.

He made overtures to Vane, who, with other highminded Republicans, had withdrawn into private life, and after discharging the duties of a place in which all before him had enriched themselves, had retired into an honourable poverty at his house in Lincolnshire. His answer to Cromwell's invitation was, that "though the reign of Saints was now no doubt begun, he was willing

for his part to defer his share in it till he should go to heaven." He was the first of the friends who one by one fell away from Cromwell, till they left him in "a lonely splendour"—Ludlow, Hutchinson, Martin, Sydney, Scot, and many more of his old comrades, who had hazarded their lives with him in beating down the old despotism, and would not join in setting up the new. It is the fate of all tyrants, and Cromwell did not escape it. When he had once, with whatever faith in his commission from on high, turned to follow the road which leads a man from being the champion of liberty, he became the enemy of liberty.

The next step to establish what Vane called "the reign of Saints" was to summon, by the General's sole authority, a Convention, or assembly of 139 delegates from the different counties of England, more or less nominated by the local Independent congregations, of "persons fearing God, and of approved fidelity and honesty," chosen (says the Proclamation) "by myself with the advice of my Council of officers"—observe the regal style—to provide "for the peace, safety, and good order of this Commonwealth." The summons runs in Oliver's own name, the manner of the summons nakedly declaring a military government, and the General supreme in England as in an army. The order was obeyed by "all but two" of those summoned. They were a strange assembly: well-meaning, religious men; a Parliament of Saints; "such a sort as never sat in

England before ;” many of them men of wealth and station, eighteen of them members of the Long Parliament ; not a few soldiers, such as Monk and Blake ; but others obscure fanatics, who have given a name of opprobrium to this “ Little Parliament ”\* which it does not deserve.

The delegates appeared at the Council Chamber, at Whitehall, on the 4th July, the day appointed by their writ of summons. There the General, standing by the window at the end of the hall opposite to the middle of the table, with a crowd of officers around him, made a long speech to the “ persons called to the Supreme Authority ” as they sat in chairs round the table. His speech lasted for more than an hour, and was delivered with great fervour and earnestness.

He began by reminding the assembly of the strange “ windings and turnings ” of Providence, in which God had wrought His purposes by “ a poor and contemptible company of men ” “ simply by their owning a principle of godliness and religion.” It had been, he said, “ full in our hearts and thoughts ” that the nation should “ reap the fruit of all the blood and treasure that had been spent

\* We may mention in passing that the nickname “ Barebones Parliament ” was given to it from one of its members, a man of doubtful character, in no way conspicuous except by his extravagant Christian name, Praise-God. His surname was Barbone, not Barebone ; he was a leather-seller. The play on his surname was not invented till later times, and has only been remembered because Hume thought it worth while to record it in his history.

in this Cause." He went on to show how this result had been endangered by the action of the Rump, and how at last he was driven to the violent act of the 20th of April "lest the Cause should have been laid aside and the liberties of the nation thrown into the hands that never bled for it." "Upon this account we thought it our duty not to suffer it, and upon this the House was dissolved." . . . We did not wish "to grasp after the power ourselves, to keep it in a military hand, no, not for a day; but, as far as God enabled us with strength and ability, to put it into the hands of proper persons that might be called from the several parts of the nation."

He then gave them advice as to their duty, reminding them of Hosea xi. 12: "Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the Saints." "Truly you are called by God to rule with Him and for Him; and you are called to be faithful with the Saints, who have been somewhat instrumental to your call"—a warning, not only an encouragement; for did not those Saints still hold the sword?—He then bade them exercise mercy and truth, purity, impartiality, sincerity; to be "as just towards an unbeliever as towards a believer;" for, as he nobly says, "I have often said foolishly, if I would miscarry I would rather do it to a believer than to an unbeliever—perhaps it is a paradox—but let's take heed of doing that which is evil to either." Next he bade them "endeavour the promoting of the gospel" and "encourage the

ministry"—not to presume on this great call of "God's people to the supreme authority," but be humble; for "perhaps you are not known by face to each other. I am confident you are strangers, coming from all parts of the nation as you do;" but owned by God, a people "formed" by Him. No one would have thought three months ago of "such a company . . . being called to the supreme authority." Yet (he seems to say) do not consider yourselves too much a Parliament. Parliaments must be called by the suffrages of the people, and "who can tell how soon God may fit the people for such a thing? . . . I would all the Lord's people were prophets. I would they were fit to be called and to call, and it is the longing of our hearts to see them once own the interest of Jesus Christ."

A grand passage of exposition of Psalm lxviii. (the Dunbar *Exurgat Deus*) follows, in which he speaks as a prophet foretelling in the words of prophecy the gathering together of the people of God "as out of deep waters."

It was noted that, the day being hot, and the room close, Cromwell, getting heated as he spoke, took off his scarlet cloak, and gave it without a word to one of the colonels to hold, a regal gesture which was interpreted as of evil omen.

The "Supreme Authority" thus called and charged had no doubt as to their own character and position. After a day spent in prayer, no chaplain being appointed where all could prophesy, they called to the chair Francis Rous, an old man,



formerly Member of Parliament for Truro, and now Provost of Eton, and voted to him and his successors in the office the title of Speaker, and proceeded to assume the name of "*Parliament of the Commonwealth of England*." They also requested Cromwell to be a member of their body, and with him Lambert, Harrison, Desborough, and Tomlinson, thus making the whole number 144, with perhaps some reference to the thousands sealed in the Apocalypse.

We do not find that Cromwell ever attended the meetings of this Parliament. He had taken his place as Sovereign in virtue of the Generalship, and would not descend to take part in debates. He never loved Parliaments. He looked upon them as necessary guardians of liberty, and as useful for law making; but the experience of the Long Parliament, and the certainty that in any assembly there would be two opinions on every question, made a Parliament to his mind unfit to govern. That must be done by the best man or men in the country. The "Constable's" office was not to be discharged by speaking and voting; it lay outside Parliamentary forms, and must be done by the armed hand.

The Parliament set to work diligently, and attended the House more fully than any previous Parliament had done. Committees were appointed for the affairs of Scotland and Ireland; for the Navy and Army; for the law; for the relief of debtors, by which we read, "three hundred poor

starving souls were freed in and about London ;” for the improvement of gaols ; for the government of the Church ; for the advancement of learning : in fact, they endeavoured to take up the work which the Long Parliament was doing somewhat too slackly, and to look into and redress all the evils of England, if not of humanity. Puritans to the backbone, men of business, but not practised in State affairs, hampered by no precedents and qualifying motives, and guided by no men of experience, they set to work to drive the coach too fast. Steady, sensible Englishmen became alarmed, and began to fear that everything old was in danger of being abolished, that property itself was in danger. No doubt all their proceedings were reported to Oliver, but he never interfered with advice or authority ; believing, say some, that God could save by few or by many ; waiting, say others, till his assembly of Saints had made themselves ridiculous, and the godly party ashamed, and he could overcome the resistance of Republicans and Puritans to his personal rule.

The Parliament did not listen to selfish murmurings, but went on with business—honestly and sensibly too, if it were not that the world is governed by opinion and custom more than by reason, and hates novelties more than abuses. They voted the abolition of the Court of Chancery, with its 23,000 unheard cases, and the entire reformation of the law. They called in question the Church establishment and the institution of tithes ;

resolved to reduce all taxation to a simple assessment on land and property ; and began to meddle with the payment of the Army and the appointment of officers.

A conventicle, held at Blackfriars, in which the wildest religious and political doctrines were preached, was much frequented by the leading Members. It was thought that reason was in danger of being superseded by so-called conscience, and good sense by spiritual conceit. The Church, the Bar, the Army, the City joined in the cry that property was in danger. If the records in the Tower, as some said, were to be burnt, and the law of Moses was to take the place of the law of England, and the Bible of the statute book, what would become of English customs and liberties ?

Cromwell said nothing, but it is probable that a hint was given ; for on the morning of the 12th of December, 1653, the Parliament resolved to deliver up their powers to the Lord General. Thereupon the House rose ; and the Speaker Rous, followed by a large number of Members, walked to Whitehall, wrote out there and then a form of resignation, and presented it to His Excellency. Cromwell "lifted up his eyes with astonishment, and with no less seeming modesty refused to receive it;" but at length, through the "importunity of Major-General Lambert and others . . . he thought fit to comply with their request." We may perhaps believe that "if he ever drolled in his life, he drolled then."

Some thirty Members remained in the House to protest against this sudden and unconstitutional act; but at the entrance of Colonel Goff and Major White, with a file of musketeers, they withdrew, and the Little Parliament was heard of no more.

In this ignominious way ended the reign of the Saints. The Little Parliament deserves a better name than it has received in history. Though summoned contrary to all precedent in English history, its members wanted neither earnestness, industry, nor ability. They failed from the want of a practical sense of what was possible in England, making paper reforms to be carried out by others, and from not understanding that institutions, like trees, cannot be planted with all their branches and leaves mature, but must grow slowly and in accordance with the conditions in which they are set. Cromwell's great power lay in attempting no more than was practical; and the ill-assorted power of this Utopian Parliament was now in the hands which could best govern the country. Civil War had ended in the establishment of a military dictator.

Three days later, after much time spent in "seeking God, and advising therein," a new Council of State, of twenty-one members, was appointed, and it was resolved "that his Excellency be chosen LORD PROTECTOR of the three nations:" and on the 16th he was installed with Royal state in Westminster Hall.

Thus then was the "supremely able man" placed in sovereign power over the country which he had saved. In his right place, who can doubt? for he was too great to admit of a rival, and he alone was able to govern a distracted country with justice and mercy. But all lovers of liberty must regret that Cromwell's ends were effected by crooked means, and that this great Englishman should have usurped by so un-English a course of action a place which was his by right of the worthiest, and which the best of the nation would have given him by a free election.

What Cromwell's motives were, besides that of common ambition, may be seen in the letter written to Hammond before the King's death; and in Carlyle's plea, that "the love of 'power,' if thou understand what to the manful heart 'power' means, is a very noble and indispensable love." "To do the highest work that is set before a man" is a man's duty, and "*thou shalt* is written upon life in characters as terrible as *thou shalt not*." But it would have been well for England if Vane and the Republicans had had the wisdom to see that it was impossible to carry on the government without Cromwell's consent, and had been content to make him President or Protector with "somewhat of monarchical power;" and well for Cromwell's good name, and for his own personal happiness, if he had not grasped at power selfishly, and gained it by unlawful means.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### Cromwell Protector.

CROMWELL'S first act as Protector was to limit his own power. He had a firm conviction that the government must be, not by Parliament only, but by a Chief Magistrate and a Parliament. This system of government was set forth in "a large writing in parchment," called the Instrument of Government. This Instrument declared the supreme legislative authority to be in one person, the Lord Protector, and the people assembled in Parliament; the administrative power to be in the Lord Protector, and a Council consisting of not less than thirteen nor more than twenty-one persons. The control of the forces was to belong to the Lord Protector and his Council, with consent of Parliament; and the management of foreign affairs, and the power of war and peace, to the Lord Protector and the majority of his Council. A Parliament of 400 members, including thirty representatives from Scotland, and the same number from Ireland, was to be elected, to meet on the 3rd of September, 1654; to sit for no more than three years, nor less than five months; to be chosen much according to the

regulations of Vane's Bill, which was itself based on Ireton's Agreement of the People, giving representation on the basis of population. All persons possessed of £200 in property, real or personal, were to be electors, except those who had taken part against the Parliament since 1641, or in the Irish Rebellion, or who professed the Roman Catholic religion. Persons elected were to be "of known integrity, fearing God, and of good conversation." The Lord Protector was to hold office for life; his successor was to be appointed by the Council. The ecclesiastical establishment was to remain unaltered for the present; but liberty of conscience was to be allowed to all who "profess faith in God by Jesus Christ," with the exception of Papists and Prelatists.

Setting aside the fact that Cromwell's authority proceeded from himself alone, the constitution thus provided was an excellent one, and appeared likely to be lasting. That it did not last was the inevitable result of the fact that the greater part of the people were against Cromwell, and that his power in the end had to rest upon the sword, not the law.

Cromwell now removed from his house in the Cockpit to the Palace of Whitehall, and "observed new and great state," assuming and receiving both from his own countrymen, "as to their Prince," and from foreign ministers the title of "Highness." But his old Republican friends turned against him. Ludlow laid down his civil commission in Ireland.

Harrison, Rich, Carew, Joyce himself, once cornet, now lieutenant-colonel, and others, were summoned before the Council for "not owning the new Protectoral government, and because they refused to engage not to act against him and his government he sent them to several prisons." Harrison went as a prisoner to the Isle of Wight, where he had been a gaoler five years before. One by one the old commanders were stowed away in prison because they could not change their convictions, and support an usurpation. "Honourable, faithful men," says Carlyle, "it is, as Oliver often says, the saddest thought of his heart that he must have old friends like them for enemies. But he cannot help it; they will have it so. They must go their way, he his."

Cromwell had by the Instrument of Government secured for himself and his Council the absolute control of the State for nine months to come. He issued Ordinances to have the force of law, by which, amongst other useful measures, Scotland was united to England, a commission of "Triers" was set on foot to admit proper persons to the ministry, and eject scandalous or ignorant clergy, another to enquire into the Universities and Public Schools, and some attempt at least was made to reform the Court of Chancery. At the same time he took off one burden, by requiring no more subscriptions to the "Engagement" of 1649, and laid on another by appointing his most trustworthy officers to superintend the several military districts of the



country. He was now more than ever the Constable set to keep the peace of the parish.

About this time two of those plots exploded which were thenceforward to trouble Cromwell till they ended only with his life. A dozen noisy and perhaps fuddled Royalist officers engaged in a silly attempt to assassinate the Protector, but were caught at once (at the Ship Tavern, in the Old Bailey) and sent to prison (18th February).

The second plot, of a more formidable sort, came from the headquarters of Royalism, from Charles Stuart himself. He and his looked on Cromwell as an unhangd murderer, and considered that any weapons were fair against so hateful a monster. A paper was circulated, bearing the King's name, in official form, declaring that "whereas a certain mechanic fellow, by name Oliver Cromwell, hath . . . usurped the supreme power . . . these are in our name to give freedom and liberty to any man whomsoever, within any of our three kingdoms, by pistol, sword, or poison, or by any other ways or means whatsoever, to destroy the life of the said Oliver Cromwell, wherein they will do an act acceptable to God and good men." Plot was met by counterplot. The Royalists devised murder, the Protector set spies to discover them.

Cromwell was living, since the 14th of April, 1654, in Royal state at Whitehall. He used often to go to Hampton Court on Saturday afternoons, with guards attending him. A Royalist gentleman, Gerard by name, Vowel, a schoolmaster at

Islington, Major Henshaw, and others, agreed to kill the Protector on Saturday, the 20th of May. Henshaw gave information. The conspirators were arrested—forty persons in all—and, as if there were no law in England, a High Court of Justice—Oliver's way of dealing with treason—was set up to try them. They protested, as Englishmen, but got no redress; were even told sneeringly that the members of the court were their "peers," and twelve, if not more, in number. Vowel was hanged; Gerard, pleading gentle blood, beheaded on the 10th of July. The Protector had shown that he could be severe on occasion. This affair made Cromwell feared in his own dominions, but another act made all Europe wonder. At the same time, and on the same block on which Gerard had suffered, was beheaded Don Pantaleon Sa, brother of the Portuguese Ambassador, who had been bold enough the former winter to call out his servants to parade the streets in arms, and set up a street riot. Cromwell had him dragged to prison from the sanctuary of the Portuguese Embassy, by the threat of letting the rioters pull down the Ambassador's house, ordered him and ten others to be tried for murder, and, as we have seen, allowed the sentence to be carried out. That same morning the Ambassador, the Count Sa, signed a treaty with England, and left London, unable to save his brother's life. This was the right English answer to the murders of Dorislaus and Ascham—a fair trial by a jury

half composed of English, half of aliens, and no favour.

We must mention Cromwell's relations with foreign powers ; for it is on his foreign policy that his fame as a ruler of England is chiefly based.

The treaty just concluded put an end to the piratical enterprises of Rupert from the coast of Portugal. The Dutch war had been fought out by the Commonwealth, and Cromwell's share in it was merely to settle the terms of peace. They were honourable to the bravery of England, if not magnanimous. The Dutch accepted the Navigation Act, and granted "the honour of the flag." They also agreed to exclude the House of Orange from all power in their State. The young prince who was thus shut out from his heritage of government was that William III. who was to carry on Cromwell's work, neglected and spoiled by the Stuarts, of making England one of the greatest powers of Europe, and who was to show her the true policy of friendship with Holland, which Cromwell and the founders of the Commonwealth had wished to cherish, but had seen changed into the bitterest rivalry.

With Sweden also negotiations were begun. Christina, the masculine daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, had the liveliest admiration of Cromwell. She saw in him the spirit of the Protestant hero who fell at Lützen. She imagined a Protestant League, which should check the power of France, as her father had checked the power of

the House of Austria. It is even said that she had wilder notions : that Cromwell should put away his wife, the good citizen's daughter, and that they two should rule over the united races of the North and beget a race of giants. Cromwell sent her his portrait, and addressed her by the mouth of Milton in strains of not insincere flattery. Bulstrode Whitelocke, much against his will, was sent as ambassador to Sweden, and concluded a close alliance with Queen Christina, and a treaty with Denmark, the old enemy of Sweden; which power was by this means detached from a dangerous alliance with France and Holland, which appeared to be threatening. The neutral and balancing powers were thus at peace with England, and the new government established so firmly, that both French and Spaniards made "liberal offers" to form an alliance. It became, as we shall see later, necessary for Cromwell to make his choice between these rival claimants of his favour. The principle of Cromwell's policy in Europe was to strengthen the Protestant interest. He "expected not much good from any of his Catholic neighbours." The shadow of the Thirty Years' War had not passed away. Protestants in France and Germany were still looked upon as enemies to the State; and the chief enemies of the English State were fostered by the Catholic powers. Peace, "so far as it may be had with conscience and honour," was to be sought in all quarters; and hence an alliance with Portugal, and even with France, was not to be despised.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *The First Protectoral Parliament.*

**O**LIVER'S fortunate day was the 3rd of September, and he had resolved that the first Parliament of the Protectorate should meet on that day, even though it was Sunday.

It is not easy to say how far the elections were tampered with. Free elections, as elections are free in our times, there had never been in England; and no doubt not a few candidates were elected by the influence of the "Court." In the main, although some of the founders and leaders of the Commonwealth were not returned, such as Vane, Martin, Ludlow, and Algernon Sydney, it was a fairly representative body, and one which might be expected to do good work. The conditions of the election had put much power into the hands of the middle class, and this secured the election of a large number of Presbyterians. The old Long Parliament was strongly represented, more than a hundred members now elected having sat in it. Bradshaw, Scot, Haslerig, Harrison, now released from prison, were there to guard the interests of liberty. On the other hand, many

of Oliver's friends and relatives were among the number elected.

Parliament met at Westminster on the 3rd of September (Sunday), and heard afternoon sermon at the Abbey. On Monday morning the Protector came in state from Whitehall to Westminster Abbey to hear a sermon preached by Mr. Thomas Goodwin. He returned after sermon "in the same equipage," preceded by "some hundreds of gentlemen, all bare," with guards of horse and foot, lackeys, pages, coaches, led horses, and all the ceremonial of royalty; himself in his coach, covered, but his lords bareheaded. Meeting his Parliament again in the Painted Chamber, he ascended a raised platform at the end of the room, where was set a chair of state; and "all being silent and bareheaded," his Highness put off his hat and made a speech to them.

They were, as he reminded them, the first Parliament of the three nations—"met on the greatest occasion that, I believe, England ever saw," bearing on their shoulders the interest of all the Christian people in the world. After many "changes and turnings," their business was to be "healing and settling," to put an end to "arbitrary" government. A few years back and all was arbitrary; there were schemes abroad to level all the old ranks and orders of men "whereby England hath been known for hundreds of years." "A nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman; that is a good interest of the nation, and a great one." The

same spirit was abroad in religion, under the plea of liberty of conscience, telling the magistrate that he had nothing to do with these things, "not so much as the printing of a Bible in the nation for the use of the people." The ministry was cried out upon as anti-Christian and Babylonish. Amongst other mistaken and dangerous notions abroad was that of a "Fifth Monarchy," the reign of Christ with His saints; "a thing pretending more spirituality than anything else," but too much mixed up with "carnal divisions and contentions," and intolerable when its professors claimed "to rule kingdoms, and determine of property, and liberty, and everything else;" proposing not to "regulate law, but that law is to be abrogated, indeed subverted; and perhaps wish to bring in the Judaical law. . . . Truly they had need to give clear manifestations of God's presence with them before wise men will receive or submit to their conclusions." Their cry, whilst the nation was rent and torn from one end to another, was nothing but "Overturn, overturn, overturn!" After this somewhat ungenerous attack upon his last Parliament he raises the "black spectre," the fear of Jesuits, their emissaries and consistories, parcelling out England into dioceses unknown to the law. Meanwhile there was war with Portugal, Holland, France. "Such was our condition; spoiled in our trade, and we at this vast expense; thus dissettled at home, and having these engagements abroad."

To remedy these evils the "Instrument of Government" had been devised, under which the Parliament had been called. The Government so constituted had endeavoured in the interim to reform the laws, to appoint as judges men of integrity and ability (such as Hale and Maynard), to reform the Chancery, and to settle the rules and limits of appointing the clergy.

He then proceeded to speak of treaties of peace made with foreign nations, of Ireland, of enemies actual and possible; and ended by saying, "I have not spoken these things as one who assumes to himself dominion over you, but as one that doth resolve to be a fellow-servant with you to the interest of these great affairs, and of the people of these nations."

This "subtle," but surely honest and wise, speech was heard, if we may judge by the result, with unwilling ears, although for the moment "all generally seemed abundantly to rejoice, by extraordinary expressions and *hums* at the conclusion." Among those who had come to Westminster by Oliver's summons a majority were inclined to dispute his authority. The strong Republicans, who looked upon all that had passed since April, 1653, as an usurpation; and the Presbyterians, who wished to restore the Long Parliament as it was before the usurpation of Independents, combined to hamper the Government.

On September 7th, the Parliament began to consider the "Instrument of Government" under



which they had been elected. It appeared at once that there was a wide difference of opinion as to the authority which had called the Parliament. Few of the Members probably wished to deprive Cromwell of the Protectorship; but there was a strong desire to define the grounds of the Protector's power, and base it on a Parliamentary footing. There were not wanting bolder voices. One Member stood up, and said "that God had made him instrumental in cutting down tyranny in one person, and now he could not endure to see the nation's liberties ready to be shackled by another, whose right to the government could be measured out no otherwise than by the length of his sword." Haslerig, Scot, Bradshaw, "and many others," upheld the Republican view. On the second day of their sitting Bradshaw moved that the House should debate the question "*whether the House should approve of Government by a single Person and a Parliament.*"

In spite of the opposition of the "Court Party," Bradshaw's motion was passed by five votes, and thus the Protector's power was deliberately called in question. The question was not so much whether Cromwell should be Protector, as whether the Protector should be subordinate to or co-ordinate with the Parliament; in short, whether the Protector was in the place of the old Kings. The debate went on for three days. At length Matthew Hale, the famous judge, proposed a compromise, by which the Protector was declared

to derive his power from Parliament, but the entire control of the Militia was granted him, with some other securities. The Republican leaders agreed to this; but the Protector himself was not so satisfied. He had deliberately taken for himself a co-ordinate jurisdiction with Parliament, not a subordinate jurisdiction; and he held clearly that government must be carried on by a Chief Magistrate, not by the majority of an assembly. Moreover he looked upon those who questioned his authority as acting dishonourably; for they had been elected under writs which had been issued by himself in the full style of a Sovereign, by indentures which had contained an express proviso that the members chosen to serve should not have "power to alter the government as it is now settled in one single Person and a Parliament." The more consistent course would have been that which Vane took in refusing to come forward for election.

As usual, Cromwell acted at once. The same day on which Hale's motion was brought forward, he sent orders to the Lord Mayor to provide against disturbances in the city, and to his own guard to be ready next morning; and early in the morning of Tuesday, the 12th of September, the Commons were summoned to meet the Protector at the Painted Chamber. Such of them as went to their own House found the doors locked and guarded by soldiers. "The mace had been taken away by Commissary-General Whalley.

The Speaker and all the Members were walking up and down the Hall, the Court of Requests, and the Painted Chamber, expecting the Protector's coming. The passages there likewise were guarded with soldiers."

Did Cromwell forget that by this insolent display of military tyranny, he was going to destroy the authority of the "free Parliament," at whose first meeting he had augured such happy things? Or was "*sic volo sic jubeo*" so strong in him that no other voice could be heard? In any case he dealt on this day a fatal blow against his own power as a lawful sovereign. Thenceforward it was clear that if Parliaments did not obey him he would "break them;" that rather than not be obeyed, he would be obeyed as a Dictator. "What" (says Cowley) "do all these actions signify? What do they say aloud to the whole nation but this (even as plainly as if it were proclaimed by heralds through the streets of London), 'You are slaves and fools, and so I will use you!'"

But his speech is wonderfully moving and eloquent, and we feel, as we read it, that he is still sincere to God and his countrymen—no common adventurer or vulgar usurper, but the appointed leader of his people, fighting against unreasonable opposition, yet so hampered by the results of two notorious acts—the King's execution, and the dismissal of the Long Parliament, as to be without a party in the State to whom he could trust. He told the Parliament that their existence

as "a free Parliament" implied a "reciprocity," or it implied nothing at all. He went therefore against his will "a little magnifying his office."

"I called not myself to this place. I say again, I called not myself to this place. Of that God is witness, and I have many witnesses who, I do believe, could lay down their lives to bear witness to the truth of that; that is to say, that I called not myself to this place! And being in it, I bear not witness to myself, but God and the people of these nations have borne testimony to it also. If my calling be from God, and my testimony from the people, *God and the people shall take it from me, else I will not part with it.* . . . I was by birth a gentleman; living neither in any considerable height, nor in obscurity. I have been called to serve in Parliament. I did endeavour to discharge the duty of an honest man . . . having, when time was, a competent acceptance in the hearts of men, and sure evidences thereof." After Worcester fight he had "hoped in a private capacity to have reaped the fruit and benefit, together with my brethren, of our hard labours and hazards." But he "was much disappointed" of his expectation that peace and rest should be restored to all England, "and especially to those who had bled more than others in the carrying on of the military affairs." "I say to you," he continues with a strange earnestness, as if the thing he was saying were incredible to those who heard him, "I say to you, I hoped to have had leave to retire into a

private life . . . and God be Judge between me and all men if I lie in this matter . . . the plain truth is . . . that it could not well be." As for the Rump, he knew "that the nation loathed their sitting. I knew it, and so far as I could discern, when they were dissolved, there was not so much as the barking of a dog, or any general and visible repining at it." He then returns to the old charges against the Long Parliament, the perpetuating of themselves, and so continuing what to Cromwell's mind was always an *arbitrary* power, able at any moment to *unlaw* a law passed by itself or by former Parliaments, and subject to no law but its own will.

The Little Parliament was called. One principal end in calling that assembly "as to myself, my greatest end" was "a desire to be quit of the power God had . . . put into my hands" with *unlimited* authority; "for by Act of Parliament I was General of all the forces in the three nations . . . in which unlimited condition I did not desire to live a day."

The Little Parliament failed; and, says he, "I had my disappointment," and was in power "as boundless and unlimited as before—a person having power over the three nations, without bound or limit set . . . all government dissolved; all civil administration at an end."

Then came the Instrument of Government. Those who drew it up offered him the government on the ground that there was no other means of

avoiding "blood and confusion." "I denied it again and again after many arguments, they urging on me that I did not hereby receive anything which put me into a higher capacity than before, but that it limited me. . . . I did accept it."

Here we must pause for a moment. Every word that Cromwell has said is true. He did not call himself to his great place, and he could not lay it down. His desire for rest, and his wish to give up labour, were genuine; but never for one moment did Cromwell mean to deliver up his power into the hands of the only men who could have succeeded him. We shall see something of the same playing with "would" and "would not" in the matter of the Royal title. It was probably impossible for him to speak straight in a matter of this kind. It is the great fault in his character that he could not deal plainly; but we may allow this and yet believe that he was not a hypocrite, and that he cared for his country more than for his own power.

His first point, "that he called not himself," being thus dealt with, his second point, that he does not bear witness to himself, is brought out in much the same manner—the publicity of his installation as Protector; the approbation of the Army, in whose hands was the sword, now the only symbol of power; of the city of London; of many cities, and boroughs, and counties; the declaration of the Judges that they could not ac

but under some warrant; in short, "all the people in England are my witnesses, and many in Ireland and Scotland." Then, somewhat grimly, he adds, "All the Sheriffs in England are my witnesses, and all that have come in upon a process issued out by Sheriffs are my witnesses; and now I shall make you my last witnesses, and ask you whether you came not hither by my writs, to sit, and not own the authority by which they sit," a thing "which I believe astonisheth more men than myself."

So much for the past. He now lays down some practical rules. There are in this, as in every constitution, some things *fundamental*, some of *circumstance*. "The government by a single Person and a Parliament is a fundamental; it is the *esse*; it is constitutive;" and by their own acceptance that single person is himself.

The second fundamental is that Parliament should not make themselves perpetual; a third is liberty of conscience. "The Magistrate hath his supremacy, and he may settle religion according to his conscience." But by what law? we may ask. It is not in the Instrument of Government; it must then be a matter of prerogative. And this sentence of Oliver's is one of many indications that he considered himself King of England from the moment that he took the Protector's sceptre in his hand.

The fourth fundamental is the Militia, "equally placed in one Person and in the Parliament," the

Protector being checked by Parliament during its Session; by his Council, "the trustees of the Commonwealth" in all intervals of Parliament.

Other things are "circumstantials," not fundamentals. He deplores the necessity of speaking thus, "but necessity hath no law." Then, with some anger and vehemence, he declares that it is "legal (Jewish), carnal, and stupid to think that there are no necessities that are manifest necessities, because necessities may be abused or feigned."

Alas! "necessity" was becoming too familiar in Oliver's mouth. What follows is in the true style of a tyrant. He accuses them of promoting and scattering division and confusion, making England the scorn and contempt of strangers; and all because "we would not settle it when we might, when God put it into our hands." When we come to give an account, we shall be able to say, "Oh, we have quarrelled for and we contested for the liberty of England! I appeal to the Lord that the liberty of England, the liberty of the people . . . is made so safe by this Act of Settlement that it will speak sufficiently for itself!"

And so, though when he might without anything "dishonest, nor dishonourable, nor against true liberty, no, not of Parliaments" have demanded more owning of their call and his authority, he had not done so, yet now . . . "I am sorry, I am sorry, and I could be sorry to the death, that there



is cause for this; but there is cause . . ." And they are to subscribe a declaration of allegiance to the Government; till which is done "I have caused a stop to be put to your entrance into the Parliament House."

No answer was attempted to this more than Royal speech. The members returned to the Lobby of the House, where the Speaker and about one hundred and thirty members of the House subscribed the declaration of allegiance, and within a few days some three hundred out of the whole number had accepted it. Among those who did not were the honest Republicans, Bradshaw, Scot, Haslerig, who henceforward are, with Vane and Martin, no part of the acting force of England. It is a fact of evil omen that on the same day on which this speech was made "Major-General Harrison was secured by a party of horse by the Lord Protector's orders."

Thus did Oliver Cromwell degrade another Parliament; thus did he make all Parliamentary government a despised thing so long as he chose to use the Army to purge or break Parliaments as it pleased him. In the defection or imprisonment of such men as Ludlow and Hutchinson we read the fate of the tyrant in Plato—to have to keep an eye on the bold, the magnanimous, the wise, the rich; "and whether he will or not, to be an enemy to them, and plot against them, till he cleanse the State from them—a fair cleansing, indeed. . . . To become a wolf, instead of a man."

This was the fate to which the genius and heart of Cromwell were being impelled by the necessity of maintaining wrongful rule. And yet he was in the right, and Parliament in the wrong, on the matter in question. He was only wrong because the foundation of his power was wrong. Cromwell had now added a third action to the two former actions which could never be forgotten. He was henceforward an enemy of Parliaments, and an enemy of liberty, and therefore of order itself—a terrible position for a man who loved his country, and loved power less than righteousness, but whom self-will and the habit of power had driven into a “necessity,” in which nothing remained to him but to lay down his life or to live as a tyrant.

The new Rump, notwithstanding the contempt into which it had been brought, continued to discuss constitutional questions as if no violence had been put upon them. The feeling of opposition to Cromwell was strong among the three hundred who had signed the Recognition of the Government as established. They turned the instrument of their humiliation, the Recognition itself, into a Resolution of the House, and through the remaining months of the year 1654 worked steadily on through the other articles of the Instrument of Government, the Protector all the while watching them, but saying nothing. In October the question was put whether the Protectorate should be hereditary in Oliver’s family. It was

negatived by two hundred to sixty, a mortification, we may be sure, to the Protector, who would have liked to be able to refuse so invidious an honour.

The Protectorate, personal or hereditary, had about this time a narrow miss of ending prematurely.

"The Duke of Holstein," says Ludlow, "made him a present of a set of grey Friesland coach-horses, with which taking the air in the Park (29th September), attended only with his secretary, Thurloe, and guard of Janissaries, he would needs take the place of the coachman, not doubting but the three pair of horses he was about to drive would prove as tame as the three nations which were ridden by him. . . . But they, unaccustomed to such a rough driver, ran away in a rage; and stopped not till they had thrown him out of the box." He was entangled in the reins and dragged for some distance, but not seriously hurt. But in his fall a pistol which he wore in his pocket went off, to the great delight of his enemies. The story was celebrated in verse;—

"He rein'd them so hard, they looked back and were scar'd  
To see him so red and so grim :  
Away then they fled ; and though he us'd to lead,  
This New-modelled Horse would lead *him*.

"But O how they snuff when his pistol flew off,  
For which all the Saints suspect him.  
Doth Providence attend him, thirty thousand defend him,  
Yet a poor pocket pistol protect him?"

This incident, of little importance in itself—for Cromwell was only laid up for a short time with a sprained ankle—informed all England that the Protector wore firearms, and presumably thought his life in danger from assassins. No doubt the danger was not imaginary. Besides the real plots of Royalists and the possible machinations of Jesuits, there was no lack of Protestant fanatics, who might go further than protesting and remaining covered, like George Fox, or flourishing about a drawn sword in Westminster Hall, like “Theaurau John.” The spirit which had made Faux and Felton criminals or martyrs could easily be roused, and nothing was more likely to rouse it than the measures of repression which were rendered necessary by its existence. But for the present there was no outbreak.

The Parliament, drudging day by day at their “constitution building,” had come to one or two clear decisions. We have seen that they refused to hear of a hereditary Protectorate. They also took into their hands the definition of religious toleration, drawing somewhat closer than Cromwell would have done the limitations of orthodoxy or tolerable error, and shutting off the Chief Magistrate from that supremacy which Cromwell had claimed in his speech. Thus defining one of the “fundamentals,” they came on dangerous ground. They trenched still nearer on the Protector’s power when they decided that his absolute right of negative should be only in such matters

“wherein the Parliament should think fit to give a negative to the Lord Protector,” thus deriving the power of the negative from Parliament, and also claiming the right of defining fundamentals. The Court party wished to declare the negative power inherent in the office of Protector, and give no right of definition except to Protector and Parliament together. The question was carried against the Court party by one hundred and nine to eighty-five. They debated again till late at night. Some hints of dissolution were dropped. The Parliament had had their lesson: true to the example of 1647, they rescinded their vote without a division (10-11 November) the very next morning.

- The final act of insubordination, which it would seem decided Cromwell to have done with Parliament and Instrument of Government at once, was the resolution that the Instrument should be presented to the Protector like an Act of Parliament, as a whole, for his acceptance or rejection; it was not to be discussed, nor was any conference to be held with Oliver. If he accepted it, well and good; if not, what then? They probably thought that Cromwell would think twice before letting so good a form of constitution perish; but
- they were mistaken.

The Parliament had secured to them by the Instrument of Government five months during which they could not be dissolved. It is strange that there was no lawyer among them to define

the word "month." The Protector chose to take the strictly legal lunar month of twenty-eight days. He kept his own counsel, and Parliament sat on, not knowing that their sand was run out.

Meantime more active and dangerous enemies than the "Pedant Parliament" were to be dealt with. The Army were dissatisfied with the new Monarchy, which was neither the Fifth Monarchy nor the Republic of 1649. Alured and Overton, faithful fellow-servants of Oliver when he too was servant and not lord of his country, were added to the number of those who could not be trusted, and were accordingly sent to prison.

The Parliament thought themselves safe at all events till the 3rd of February, but on the 22nd of January they received a sudden message to attend the Protector in the Painted Chamber. They had put off voting supplies, thinking there was time enough; but the Protector had his own ways of raising supplies, and was not likely to boggle at constitutional difficulties.

The Parliament came to the Painted Chamber, and the Protector in some anger dismissed them, telling them of his deep disappointment that they had sheltered weeds and nettles, briars and thorns, Royalists and Levellers, under their shadow, and left him to care for "the peace and quiet of these nations." He spoke of dangers from all sides; of his own position, and how the nation had accepted it; of toleration, and how ill they had interpreted liberty of conscience; of their silence towards

himself, "as if the laying grounds for a quarrel had rather been designed than to give the people settlement;" then discussed the balance of power between Protector and Parliament, especially with regard to the command of the Militia, speaking on this head with great wisdom and moderation. Of the hereditary succession, he said that if it had been offered him he would have rejected it, believing that God's way would be that of the Judges of Israel rather than the Kings, and "liking" that it should be so. Yet, he said, "I cannot tell what God will do with me, nor with you, nor with the nation, for throwing away precious opportunities committed to us." He then returned to his old story of necessity to excuse the illegal raising of money on which he had determined, protesting vehemently that he had not "*made* necessities." "I say this not only to this assembly, but to the world, that that man liveth not that can come to me and charge me that I have in these great resolutions *made* necessities." "I bless God I have been inured to difficulties, and I never found God failing when I trusted in Him. I can laugh and sing in my heart when I speak of these things to you or elsewhere. I challenge even all that fear God;" nor, he protests, is it "the cunning of the Lord Protector" . . . "five or six cunning men in England that have skill." No; it is God who speaks "with or without a written word, yet according to it." How can that be read by "men

that live upon their *mumpsimus* and *sumpsimus*," mere formalists and constitution-mongers? God's ways are not to be judged by men without danger of blasphemy.

And so he sent them about their business; not without some reason, if he had been in a lawful position to do it, but making no secret of the contempt and dislike he felt towards any set of men who preferred to think and act for themselves rather than obey. The Parliament no doubt had acted more like clerks than statesmen, thinking to bind their Sampson with withes of paper. What we must lament in this sorry quarrel is that more attempts were not made on either side to bring about an understanding. The Parliament were to blame for their suspicious and hostile attitude; and the Protector for his airs of Royal dignity, which prevented him from meeting them in conference and using his irresistible power of persuasion to bring them into harmony with himself. It is hardly to be believed but that at the last he would have been able to alter the new scheme of Government to suit his own ideas, which were reasonable, reserving still the weapon of dissolution; but he would not have it so. Patient as he was, his patience when it gave way broke suddenly, and left him under the power of anger and impulse.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *The Major-Generals.*

THE Parliament might look upon "constitution-building" as their principal work to be done in England, and themselves as the most important personages in the country. Such was not Cromwell's view. To his mind, with a good "Constable," a disciplined and well-paid fleet and army, a godly ministry, and good provision for education, a nation ought to be contented, and trust the man who held all this together. But the nation was not contented, and plots arose all around; always foreseen, always crushed in time, but not the less real and alarming. Overton had been arrested. Sexby, another old soldier, was now imprisoned. The two hostile parties of Cavaliers and Levellers were combining to put an end to the existing Government, hoping to make terms with each other afterwards. A party of horse surprised Major John Wildman as he was dictating a paper, headed "the Declaration of the free and well-affected people of England now in arms against the tyrant Oliver Cromwell, Esquire," in which the Protector is

charged with hypocrisy and ambition, and with "having made a sacrifice of all our laws, liberties, and properties unto his own ambition." The intended rebellion was not far from bursting out when its leaders were apprehended. We read of such names as Okey, Alured, Hewson, Hacker, even Henry Martin and Lord Grey of Groby, as being engaged in it. Haslerig would join from Durham "if the candle were once lighted;" in Yorkshire, Somerset, and the southern counties a rising was to take place. The combination of Cavalier and Anabaptist was unnatural, but Charles II. was ready to try anything that turned up; and, on the other hand, the Republican party might hope that if Cromwell were once removed it would be possible to bind the King by Acts of Parliament, and set up that constitution which his father had destroyed by going to war in 1642.

The principal outburst was at Salisbury (3rd April), where Sir Joseph Wagstaff, a Royalist lately arrived from Holland, and Colonel Penruddock, a Wiltshire gentleman, came upon the town at the time of the assizes, and laid hands upon the Judges. Wagstaff was for hanging them on the spot. Penruddock protested against this barbarity, and the Judges were dismissed unhurt. Wagstaff and Penruddock found Salisbury too hot to hold them, and retreated into Devonshire, where (at South Molton) they were defeated. Wagstaff escaped; Penruddock and some others, all Royalists, were executed; and many of the inferior

prisoners were "Barbadosed," to be sold as slaves—an inhuman proceeding which excited less indignation than might be expected, though Vane and Haslerig protested against it, and Cowley cries out in hot indignation as worse than all murder, "his selling of Christians, Englishmen, gentlemen, his selling of them (oh, monstrous! oh, incredible!) to be slaves in America."

The danger was over for the moment. By vigilance, by prompt action, by necessary severity, the insurrection was prevented from breaking into a dangerous flame. But rebellion, though stifled, was not dead, and Cromwell had to be on his guard as long as he lived against those who hated him, and those who had loved him—the Brutuses who cared for their country before their friend.

Another case which deserved to be as notorious as that of Hampden was the case of one Cony, a merchant in London, who refused, whilst the Parliament was still sitting (4th November) to pay some customs duties charged upon him. The money was taken by distraint. Cony brought an action to recover it on the ground that it had been levied by no lawful authority.

Here was a case like those pleaded against Charles I. Maynard, Twisden, and Windham, three of the first lawyers in England, appeared for Cony. The Protector threw them into prison on the ground of seditious language. Cony took up his own defence, and declared himself ready to abide by the opinion of the Judge, "whether

that tax, not being authorized by Parliament, ought to be paid by the law of the land." Chief Justice Rolls spoke of "necessity," to which Cony replied that it was a bad plea "for a man to make necessities and then to plead them." Cromwell tried what personal influence would do, and failing, told Cony "he had a will as stubborn as his, and he would try which of them two should be master."

At length, it being the last day of term, Chief Justice Rolls took occasion of a slight informality in the papers before the court, and adjourned the case; and in the meantime got his discharge from Cromwell, who about the same time dismissed the Commissioners of the Great Seal, and among them even the obsequious Whitelocke, because they refused to "work the business of the Court of Chancery by newfangled rules, made at the Protector's bidding without their counsel had."

Sir Matthew Hale, the most illustrious of Oliver's Judges, having torn up a list of jurymen recommended by Cromwell, and ordered the Sheriff to draw up a new one, the Protector said to him, "You are not fit to be a judge." "You are right," said Hale. But so long as Hale would sit as judge Cromwell had too much sense of the advantage of being served by such a man, and too much respect for his honesty, to get rid of him.

Thus was Cromwell's government sliding deeper and deeper into absolutism. He was now guilty of arresting men without legal warrant; of trying,

executing, banishing, and selling Englishmen by unlawful courts, or by his own mere order; of tampering with judges and courts of law; of levying money violently and illegally, all under plea of necessity—necessity which, as all his countrymen said, he had made himself.

Cromwell had great designs on hand, for which great sums of money were needed. To keep the country quiet, and at the same time to punish the mass of the disaffected, the Episcopalians and Royalists, he now devised an extensive plan—a plan contrary to the principles of “healing” which he professed, but justifiable on the ground of public safety. The Royalists had had mercy offered them, and the hope of reconciliation. The Protector’s secret intelligence about Penruddock’s plot had shown that the whole Royalist party (so to speak) was involved in it. They had therefore neglected their pardon, and might be looked upon as relapsed. He determined accordingly to raise the chief part of the money which he required by an assessment on the Royalists, a plan carried out with that perfectness of execution which distinguished Oliver’s administration; so, indeed, as to get the greatest profit in the shortest time, and with the least suffering possible.

He began by suddenly arresting more than fifty Royalist lords and gentlemen. His object in these wholesale arrests was not to stop any existing plot, but to raise a feeling of uneasiness—for all men knew that the Protector was well

served in secret, and knew more than they knew—and to justify the severity which he intended. This took place in the month of June, 1655. On the 6th of July, all Royalists, not residents, were ordered to leave London within six days. Then followed an order of council to suppress all unlicensed newspapers, by which the number of newspapers was reduced to two. A tax was laid upon the Royalists called the “Decimation tax,” or the tenth penny, a tax of ten per cent. on the annual income of those who had compounded with the Government. To carry out effectively the levying of this tax, and at the same time to extend his personal government over the whole kingdom, the Protector devised an extension of the old English system of the Militia, and organised a new Militia of horse and foot to be raised in all the counties. It was, in fact, a military occupation of the country. England and Wales were divided into twelve districts, each of which was put into the hands of one of Oliver’s most trusted officers—moderate men, good soldiers, and among the principal men in the army. The names of Fleetwood, Lambert, Desborough, Whalley, Skippon, amongst others, are evidence enough that the plan was meant to be worked orderly and soberly. The Major-Generals, as they were called, were not merely to act as military officers or tax-collectors; they were to see to the disarming of suspected persons; to suppress highway robbery; to put down all unlawful meetings, such

as those for horse-races, cock-fightings, and bear-baitings; to keep an eye on all persons who had no visible way of livelihood or employment; to have general control over the good order of their districts, and to report constantly to an office which was to be established in London.

A Declaration was put out in October, in which the Protector justified at length the whole scheme on the ground of necessity, and charged the blame upon the whole Royalist party, who had by their complicity in the late conspiracy forfeited the benefit of the Act of Oblivion, and other indulgences; calling the Royalists themselves to bear witness to his unwillingness, and the necessity put upon him. Cromwell's pleadings and protestings were in part addressed to his own conscience, and are an evidence that his conscience still lived.

It was not, however, the Royalists alone whom the new Militia was devised to coerce. The opposition to taxation by illegal authority, the hesitation of the Judges to proceed on the same record as in cases of treason against the insurgents at Salisbury and elsewhere, and the refusal of the Chancery Commissioners to work the new rules of Chancery established by Ordinance and not sanctioned by Parliament, had shown Cromwell that he could not work with the ordinary instruments of government, but must look for maintenance of public order to himself as General and to the Army under his command. He is reported to have said to the Judges, "If you gentlemen

of the red robe will not execute the law, my red coats shall." He wished it to be plain to the whole nation that, whether lawfully or not, he would be obeyed, and would take the law into his own hands rather than let it be broken for want of legality. Probably also he wished to check the opposition of the Army, which had so often thwarted him, by the creation of a new Militia, which would give him a foundation for a second "new modelling" of the Army if the occasion should arise. In any case, no more effective measure could have been taken to show the people of England that they had a master who could both rule and punish, than the appointment of a military government, disgraced by no military licence, but restrained by no other law than their own instructions, clearly laid down and honestly obeyed. Cromwell always wished to restore liberty to England, as his recourse to successive Parliaments showed. And this "little thing" was not intended as a permanent institution, but to show both friends and foes what his power was, and that in time of anarchy he could dispense with laws.

The Major-Generals did their work zealously, but with as little odium as was possible in discharging so invidious a duty. "The Lord's people had comfortable protection" under them. The Royalists had no escape; for the only appeal from the orders of a Major-General was to the Protector in Council. The tax was collected



rapidly, and exacted rigidly. It was a harsh unpopular measure; but so wide was the disaffection, and so strong the desire for a Restoration, that probably less would not have sufficed to prevent insurrection; and in fact it succeeded. It is possible, indeed, that it may have been some relief to the Royalists to "know definitely what their principles were to cost them," and not to be in danger at every turn of arrest on suspicion.

But though he dealt in so tyrannical a manner with the lives and liberties of his subjects, Cromwell was not only feared, but respected. Most men are not politicians; and if trade is safe, and the law is administered justly in matters between man and man, and they are not overburdened with taxes, they will bear much of that which under a capricious government is intolerable oppression.

"Justice," says an enemy of Cromwell, "that we may not scourge him beyond his deserts, was renewed almost to her former grace and splendour . . . the Judges executing their office with equity and justice, far from covetousness, and the laws suffered without delay or let to have their full force upon all. . . . There was also a strict discipline kept in his court. One could find none here that was drunkard . . . none that was guilty of extortion and oppression, but he was severely rebuked. Now trade began to flourish, and, to say all in a word, all England over these were Halcyon days."

He kept decorous but inexpensive state. He "provided him a guard of Halberdiers in gray coats, welted with black velvet." They were soon nicknamed "The Magpies." He was served with Royal ceremony. "A great deal of state was now used towards him, and the *French cringe* and other ceremonious pieces of gallantry and good deportment, which were thought unchristian and savouring of carnality, introduced in place of austere and down looks, and the silent mummerly of starched and hypocritical gravity, the only becoming dress (forsooth) of piety and religion." His wife (a matter of much merriment to the Cavaliers) "very carefully housewifed it, and would nicely and finically tax the expensive unthriftiness (as said she) of the *other woman* who lived there before her." There was, of course, no dancing or masquing at Court, nor were theatres allowed. But the Protector loved music, and gave state concerts at Whitehall, and would "give out a psalm himself;" and Sir William Davenant, who had written masques for King Charles, was, "notwithstanding the nicety of the times," permitted to set up an "Italian opera" at Rutland House, in Charterhouse Yard, at which the Court was present (3rd September). There were no scenes, but an apology offered for their absence; the music was composed by Lawes and others. State banquets were given on Mondays. For the rest of the week the Protector's "own diet was very spare."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### *Foreign Policy.*

THE Protectoral throne seemed to be established. Oliver, if not King, was as absolute a Sovereign as any in Europe. But (says Clarendon) his greatness at home was but a shadow of his glory abroad.

He had, as we said, great designs on hand, and had now leisure and money to carry them out. Mazarin, in France, and Cardeñas, the ambassador of Spain, were rivals for his favour. These two powers were at war—the after-pains of the Thirty Years' War—and great offers were made by both. The Spaniards were threatening France both on the side of Artois and from Lorraine. The Prince of Condé was their commander; for the civil wars of the Fronde, which had distracted France for the last six years, were not yet at an end. But while the French offered the possession of Dunkirk, if taken by the joint armies from Spain, the Spaniards had less to offer. Spain, not France, was the commercial rival of England. The French, too, practised religious toleration, and were allied with Protestant powers, while the Spaniards upheld the Inquisition and the whole of the Papal system. Cromwell asked for facilities of trade in the West Indies, and for toleration

of the Protestant religion. The Spanish envoy answered that these were "the two eyes of his master," and spoke of the straight line drawn by Pope Alexander VI. as the charter of Spain to the possession of America. Cromwell, whose model in foreign politics was Queen Elizabeth, was indignant at these exclusive claims. The allusion to the Papal grant was in his eyes an insult. It would seem that (as has been said) he desired to avenge the failure of Sir Walter Raleigh. He determined, not without opposition from his Council, to embrace the French alliance, and equipped a great armament to invade the Spanish possessions in America. "We think" (he writes), "and it is much designed amongst us, to strive with the Spaniard for the mastery of all those seas." There he might win glory and riches for his country, and at the same time strike a blow for the Protestant religion, of which he considered himself the champion all the world over.

The fleet, under Blake, Popham, and the other generals, was not only well equipped and exercised, but full of the pride and courage inspired by a long course of victories. Blake had fought and conquered at Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, and had cleared the seas of pirates and corsairs. In command of the West Indian squadron Cromwell placed Admirals Penn and Venables. They had large discretion given them. The expedition sailed in December, before the dissolution of Parliament. They landed in Barbadoes, 29th January, 1655,

reinforced their ships and men, and sailed 31st March for Hispaniola, eager to avenge the insults of the Spaniards, who had burnt English ships, murdered English crews, and sent many Englishmen to work as slaves in the silver mines of America. Quarrels arose between the commanders as to the best place to land. The soldiers were inclined to mutiny as soon as they were forbidden to plunder—a bad omen for the success of the expedition. They were landed with scant provisions, and no supply of water, forty miles from the town which they were to attack. Struck with sickness, and weakened by hunger, they were attacked at a disadvantage, and narrowly escaped being cut to pieces by a vastly inferior force. There was nothing left for it but to retreat. Hispaniola was abandoned, and with it the great hopes of plunder and conquest with which the armament had sailed from England. To avoid returning empty-handed, they took possession of the island of Jamaica, which has been a British colony ever since.

It was a poor result of so much money and such gallant boasting. Cromwell had played for the stake of half the Indies, and the failure of the expedition was a bitter disappointment to him. If Blake had been in command, the expedition to the West Indies would have been one of the most glorious in our history. As it was, we gained one useful colony; but the Protector suffered a great mortification, and our naval

glory received a check at the hands of enemies not so worthy of our steel as Van Tromp and De Ruyter.

The story of Cromwell's dealings with Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, has always been remembered to his credit. It is not only creditable to him, but to the English nation also ; for, as Carlyle says, it was felt in this that he "had been the Captain of England, and had truly expressed the heart, and done the will, of England." The Duke of Savoy, or his mother, the sister of Henrietta Maria, resolved on the conversion of the inhabitants of some remote Alpine valleys—Waldenses or Protestants of ancient date. Friars were sent to convert them, one of whom was murdered. The order was then given that they were at once to embrace the Catholic religion or leave their homes. It was midwinter, and the Duke's orders were not immediately obeyed. In the middle of April, 1655, troops were sent. That horrible cruelties were exercised on the defenceless Protestants no one can doubt, though, as is always the case, details of incredible atrocity soon gathered round the main facts, which needed no exaggeration. News arrived slowly. Cromwell lost no time in summoning Milton, whose sonorous Latin letters were sent to the Duke of Savoy, dated 25th May ; on the next day he sent one of his secretaries, Samuel Morland, to investigate the facts, who, arriving at the Court of Savoy on the 21st of June, and admitted to an audience, used language seldom heard by sovereigns. Yet no resentment

was expressed ; those of the persecuted Protestants who remained were "pardoned" and restored to their villages. Cromwell had gone so far as to refuse to sign a treaty of amity with France until Cardinal Mazarin had promised to insist upon compensation from the Duke of Savoy. The Cardinal and the Duke complied more quickly than Cromwell had perhaps wished, and he had to content himself with the restoration of the persecuted Piedmontese to their homes and their rights, and to forego the pleasure of landing English troops in Italy and chastising Charles Emanuel at Turin. It is probable that Blake's squadron in the Mediterranean hastened the conclusion of the affair.

Not content with menaces and embassies, Cromwell set on foot a subscription for the relief of the Piedmontese. His own contribution was £2,000, a sum equivalent to £7,000 or £8,000 at the present value of money. Collections were ordered in all parishes, and the whole sum collected amounted at length to more than £38,000, which may represent nearly £140,000 of our money, and this at a time when the population of England was not more than one-fifth of its present number. Large contributions came in from other Protestant nations, but that of England was the most remarkable ; and to this day the inhabitants of these valleys, peacefully enjoying the exercise of their Protestant worship, point out a stone dyke as having been built with the money furnished to their needs from their English brethren. But the most durable

monument of Cromwell's courage and generosity is the sonnet written by Milton, the language of which is in great measure taken from the despatches sent home by Morland :

“Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered Saints, whose bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;  
Even them, who kept thy Truth so pure of old,  
When all our Fathers worshipped stocks and stones,  
Forget not : in thy book record their groans,  
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold  
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that roll'd  
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans  
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they  
To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow  
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway  
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow  
A hundred fold, who, having learnt thy way,  
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.”

This was not the only occasion on which Cromwell showed a haughty demeanour in dealing with France. Mazarin had enough on his hands with the Spanish war, and the troubles of the Fronde, and could be dealt with at an advantage. He knew that Cromwell desired the French alliance, but knew also that he might think it worth while to renew the ancient alliance with Spain if France were too stiff in her action. He had some fears of an European Protestant League, of which England would be the head. Soft words cost him little, for he had nothing of the spirit of Richelieu. Prestige was more necessary to Cromwell than troops, which he did not want. To have the ambassadors of Spain and France vying with each



other which should show him the humbler deference was not enough. He must be styled the equal of kings, and was but half satisfied with the title of "Brother," and the promise of the fullest honours if he would assume the title of King. Mazarin is said to have answered Lewis XIV., on his asking indignantly, "Am I to call this upstart my brother?" "Yes, and 'father' too if anything is to be gained by it." How much the French Court put up with in their desire for a treaty may be seen by a letter of Mazarin: "Anyone may see not only that we wish for a peace, but wish for it most earnestly (*avec grande passion*), if he will consider all the advances we have made to the Protector, the honours which we have given him, the acts of grace done to the English to please him. —I have even spent money of my own for the redemption of ships of theirs taken by Prince Rupert—and on the other hand, the coldness and contempt with which the Protector has treated us, his delays and procrastinations, acts of hostility and depredations at the hands of the English, the violation of the rights of nations in the case of the *Sieur de Baas*, Blake's avowedly hostile appearance in the Mediterranean; hostile measures in America also; in short, after suffering so much, it is time to make a secure peace or none at all. The French people cannot be expected to sit for ever with their arms folded, and see their goods pillaged, their families desolated, and all the other evils which the English inflict on them daily."

*Mazarine*

## CHAPTER XXV.

### Second Protectorate Parliament.

IT was never Cromwell's intention to govern without the consent of the people. He would not give up the hope of making them his willing subjects. The present seemed a good opportunity for calling a Parliament. The Major-Generals could see to the elections with no more violence to the popular choice than had been exercised by former Sovereigns, and it might be hoped that the nation had learnt the lesson which the new Militia was meant to teach. The reports which the Major-Generals sent in from their districts show that they employed no force, but all measures short of force, to procure the election of the Court candidates; and that the prevailing feeling in the country was one of dissatisfaction with the existing Government, but fear of worse if it were upset. The elections were conducted, as the writs had been sent out, under the instruction of Government.

All possible care was used "that the qualifications in the Government be observed," and the godly party worked with the Major-Generals to

press the qualifications close. A pamphlet appeared, and was widely circulated, which was attributed to Sir Henry Vane. The writer called upon the electors to remember that, though they were summoned to vote by an unlawful authority, they would vote in virtue of a right which no government could give or take away, and were bound in conscience to vote for the best supporters of the cause.

Vane also published at the same time another pamphlet, entitled *A Healing Question*, in which, after acknowledging the faithfulness and wisdom of the Army and its General, he discusses forms of government, and decides, or at least inclines, in favour of a limited Monarchy. Cromwell had no mind to be limited further than the Instrument of Government limited him, and we have seen how strongly he stood on his own interpretation of prerogative. Vane was called before the Council and examined. He bore himself haughtily, as he had a right to do; refused to make any submission, and went so far as to observe "how exactly they tread in the steps of the former King." He was imprisoned at Carisbrooke on the 9th of September, but soon set at liberty.

About the same time Cromwell, making unlimited use of the licence to arrest which he assumed (partly perhaps to make men weary of "arbitrariness"), imprisoned others besides Sir Henry Vane. Rich was sent to Windsor, Harrison to Pendennis; Bradshaw, late Lord President, was

dismissed from the office of Chief Justice of Chester; Ludlow was called before the Council, but dismissed without giving any promise of good behaviour.

Notwithstanding these precautions, the elections did not give the Protector complete satisfaction. In Yorkshire, Suffolk, Kent, the cry was raised, "No swordsmen! no decimators! none of the Protector's creatures! no men that receive salaries!" At Canterbury there was fear that Cony would be elected; in Lincolnshire Vane himself had many supporters. At Westminster there was a serious riot against "Anabaptists," in which many men were killed and wounded; and in the end a large number of the Members of the new Parliament were liable to objection as disaffected, of doubtful life, "common swearers," drunkards, or in other ways not of "known integrity."

The Parliament met on the 17th of September. After prayers and sermon at the Abbey, the House was summoned to meet the Protector in the Painted Chamber. He harangued them at great length, telling them that he had called them together to consult about the war with Spain, a nation which had always been the main prop of Popery; one which designed "the empire of the whole Christian world, if not more," and which had dealt with assassination since the time of "Queen Elizabeth, of famous memory—we need not be ashamed to call her so," a state that would

give neither freedom of trade nor toleration of religion.

For home affairs, the first and most dangerous was that of the enemies at home, whose interest—Charles Stuart's interest—Spain had espoused. As the interest of the Commonwealth was the interest of all Protestants in Europe, so Papists and Cavaliers were "shaking hands" in England. There were insurrections plotted in all parts of England, most of which had been discovered and crushed so quickly and completely that now "it will not be believed" that there was any reality in the danger. Assassinations too were designed, and even Levellers and Fifth Monarchy men, fanatics, were blind enough "to advise with the King of Spain to land forces to invade the nation."

This, then, was the justification of "a little poor invention" much spoken of—the institution of the Major-Generals. "To have a little inspection upon the people thus divided, thus discontented, thus dissatisfied . . . and the workings of the Popish party," righteously charged upon that party which was the cause of it. "If this were to be done again, I would do it."

The remedies for the future were security, and reformation, the "best security." For outward security, to prosecute war vigorously or not do it at all; "to forbear waste of time, precious time . . . not to disregard the enemy abroad or at home." They must not even spare Protestants if Pro-

testants were traitors. "*Ense rescindendum est immedicabile vulnus*;" they must "eradicate," or be eradicated.

This brings him to the subject of Toleration, concerning which his principle was, that all who would live peaceably should "enjoy conscience and liberty to themselves . . . and truly I am against all liberty of conscience repugnant to this, and *I will not suffer it.*"

He takes credit—and with justice; for he was himself the most diligent of Triers—for the working of the system of Triers and Expurgators, by which the clergy were made to pass "such an approbation as [they] never passed in England before;" something better than the mere university stamp of "Mr. Parson nor Doctor," though he would not be understood to say a word against the Universities or against learning.

For reformation—there was much need of it. Yet the character of loose living was rather that of the Cavalier interest fifteen or sixteen years before, "whether in Cæsar's house or elsewhere," when it was a *shame* to be a Christian. Liberty and prosperity depended upon reformation. "The mind is the man. If that be kept pure, a man signifies somewhat; if not, I would fain see what difference there is betwixt him and a beast. He hath only some activity to do some more mischief."

Reformation of Law, too, was needed. There were good judges, but many "wicked and abomin-

able laws." . . . "To hang a man for six and eightpence . . . to hang for a trifle and acquit murder . . . this is a thing God will reckon for."

Coming to his peroration—for there is a plan in all Cromwell's speeches, though in the course of speaking he often overruns it—he directs the attention of Parliament to the ways and means of war, justifying his own Government on the score of expense. And then, breaking into a more natural strain of exhortation, he says, "I pray and beseech you in the name of Christ, show yourselves to be men . . . Christian men. It is not a neutral spirit, a Laodicean spirit, that will carry this work on. . . . It will not depend upon formalities, nor notions, nor speeches. I do not look the work should be done by these. . . . Therefore I beseech you do not dispute of unnecessary and unprofitable things. . . . I think *every* objection that ariseth is not to be answered; nor have I time for it. . . . Know assuredly that . . . *I am by the voice of the people the Supreme Magistrate.* . . . If I have any peculiar interest which is personal to myself, which is not subversive to the public end, it were not an extravagant thing to curse myself, *because I know God will curse me if I have!* I have learned too much of God to dally with Him, and to be bold with Him in these things. And I hope I never shall be bold with Him, though I can be bold with men if Christ be pleased to assist. . . . I have a little faith; I have a little lived by faith, and therein I

may be bold. If I spoke other than the affections and secrets of my heart, I know He would not bear it at my hands. Therefore, in the fear and name of God, go on . . . and the blessing of God go with you; and the blessing of God will go with you."

Here the speech seemed to close. But he recalled them for a moment to comment on Psalm lxxxv., applying it to modern senses, and Psalm xlv., "Luther's psalm; that is a rare psalm for a Christian. . . . 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.' If Pope, and Spaniard, and Devil and all, set themselves against us . . . yet in the name of the Lord we should destroy them. . . . 'The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.'"

It is hardly credible that, while Cromwell was speaking in this inspired strain, he had determined to put violence upon this very Parliament whom he was thus solemnly adjuring to unity and confidence in God. It is impossible to read the speech and doubt of the speaker's sincerity, unless we can believe him to have been the most blasphemous of perjurers. It is one of those contradictions which can be reconciled by no ordinary methods, and which are only partially reconciled by the belief which Cromwell is said to have avowed, that extraordinary men are not to be judged by ordinary rules; that, in short, the self-will of an inspired leader overrides common right and wrong.



A guard of soldiers was set at the House, and before the Members were allowed to sit the Deputy Clerk of the Commonwealth delivered as each came up a ticket certifying that such and such a Member had been duly elected and "approved by His Highness's Council." This was in virtue of the 21st Article of the Instrument of Government, which empowered the Council to ascertain that all members of the House satisfied the "qualifications" mentioned in the preceding Articles. On these grounds no less than one hundred Members were excluded. The exclusions would seem to have been made on political grounds in the more conspicuous cases, those excluded being strong Republicans, who disliked Cromwell's autocracy, and would not be likely to vote for giving him the crown which it was supposed he coveted. Others were excluded on account of rigid Presbyterian opinions tending to accommodation with the Royal Family, and some no doubt for "carnal" living, according to complaints brought against them by their neighbours.

Cromwell's main object was to get an obedient House of Commons, which would register his decrees, and enable him to keep that armed peace which was the only security after revolution. England had always been ready to obey a strong king, and tolerant of a defective title. If he relaxed the strong grasp of power, or gave in ever so little to notions of government by Parliament, popular representation, democratic republicanism'

all would soon be confusion again. Cromwell too had something of bravado in his character. Like Drawcansir, as it has been said, he liked to think, "And all this I can do because I dare." "He loved to tread on the verge of the impossible; to do that which before the experiment would be deemed too bold for fiction." And so on some great occasions he trusted to his own violent instincts, and finding that such things were endured, he was emboldened to repeat them.

The excluded Members, or some of them, immediately drew up, and circulated through the country, a spirited remonstrance, in which they openly charged the Protector with tyranny, treason, and hypocrisy, "doubting not but, as the manner of the man had been, that the name of God and religion, and formal fasts and prayers, will be made use of to colour over the blackness of the deed." No king of England (they said) had ever dared so to tamper with a Parliament. None but a conqueror could so set himself above the people of England, and a conqueror is a public enemy. Enemies too were all those who had advised or assisted the Protector in so acting; and all such Members as should sit and vote in the present mutilated Parliament were to be accounted "betrayers of the liberties of England, and adherents to the capital enemies of the Commonwealth."

Cromwell was magnanimous, or cynical enough to take no notice of the remonstrance. He had

done his deed, and he was used to clamour and obloquy.

The history of our own times is in great measure transacted in Parliament. It was not so 200 years ago. Cromwell's thoughts and activity were fully employed during the period the Parliamentary history of which we have traced. The seven thick folios of Thurloe contain what survives of the immense mass of public business discharged by Cromwell during the Protectorate, faithfully served by that laborious secretary. Cromwell was a perfect man of business. He took everything at the right time; saw the bearings of everything; was instant in decision, rapid and clear in statement, and immovable in resolve. At home, the suppression of faction, involving as it did much correspondence with foreign Powers, and relations with informers of every degree; finance; the Army and Navy and their discontents; all the business of the Major-Generals; the affairs of the Churches and Universities; the reform and administration of the Law; the government of Ireland and Scotland. Abroad, the war, with all its details; the alliances with other Powers; Sweden, under its ambitious and daring King, Charles X.; France, under Mazarin; the Protestant princes of Germany; the Protestant and Christian Protectorate, extending as far as Transylvania, Italy, and the north coast of Africa; the quarrel for the mastery of the seas; the "planting" of the West Indies, and especially of his own conquest, Jamaica (which he designed to

people from New England); the settlement of the North American colonies, Royalist Virginia, Puritan New England; the defence of the English colonists in America against their neighbours and rivals, the French. All these were Cromwell's daily cares. More truly could it be said of him than of Lewis XIV. that "the State was himself;" for Lewis XIV. worked with able ministers at the head of each department of government; Cromwell kept all in his own hand. Of the men who could have worked at his side, some were estranged from him, others were employed as mere military deputies. He had the genius of command rather than that of government, and worked the vast machine of the English Commonwealth as if he were still the general of an army with one indefatigable lieutenant, served by a host of spies and informers. It is not wonderful if he looked upon Parliaments as a department of government, and subject to his control like other departments. The "hide-bound constitutionalities" of Puritan Members must have seemed to him unpractical, as indeed they were likely to be, when power was absent and the responsibility which attends power. The Protector himself, not the Parliament, was responsible for everything; yet the Parliament, though purged and humbled, had by its election a better title to power than the Sovereign who had called it.

What Cromwell wanted was the "divinity which doth hedge a king." The English dislike to

novelties, which is expressed in the formula, "*nolumus leges Angliæ mutare*," rests upon good sense no less than dulness. As Cromwell said, "The people love what they know." A Puritan Republic in arms against the Pope, the Spaniard, and the Devil, might, with fortune and good guidance, in time have superseded the Monarchy. A wise and strong king might again have reigned as absolutely as Henry VIII. or Elizabeth. But the people knew nothing of an armed Protector making laws by ordinance, and disposing of Englishmen's liberty and property by rules not known to their ancestors.

Cromwell, therefore, who had assumed the full sovereignty in 1653, desired the name of king, and with it the restraints as well as the prerogatives of royalty. As he sincerely said, he did not wish to hold an "arbitrary" power, "no, not for a day." It would not be true to say that the Parliament of 1656 was called in order to make him king; but that end was not absent from Cromwell's mind, and it was partly to that end that the House was purged of the hundred Republicans whose help could not be expected. The Major-Generals had done their work well, and it might be expected that their office would cease when Parliament met. The Protector should either have continued them in office or dismissed them handsomely, and with recognition of their services. But Cromwell could seldom do anything by straightforward courses; on the present occasion he disconcerted his supporters

in Parliament, and alienated his most faithful officers by allowing relatives of his own to speak lightly of the Major-Generals. One piece of buffoonery gave especial offence. A proposal to continue the Decimation Tax on Royalists was brought forward, as it seemed, officially by the Secretary of State, Thurloe. All were surprised when Cromwell's son-in-law, Claypole, rose and opposed the motion as a violation of the amnesty, and an act of bad faith. The Bill was supported by several of the Major-Generals, and the debate continued for some days. At length Colonel Henry Cromwell, a cousin of the Protector, "set the house on fire" by a declaration that some of the Major-Generals had acted unjustly, and against the law. He offered to give names and proofs. When the House broke up some of the Major-Generals threatened him with the Protector's anger. Henry Cromwell went directly to Whitehall with "his black book and papers ready to make good what he had asserted. His Highness answered him in raillery, took a rich scarlet cloak from his back, and gloves from his hands, and gave them to Harry, who strutted with his new cloak and gloves in the House the next day, to the great satisfaction and delight of some, and trouble of others." The result of the whole affair was that the party opposed to military government threw out the Bill by a large majority, and the Major-Generals were not only discarded, but left by Cromwell "exposed to actions at law

for the exercise of those powers which they had accepted in obedience to his command." It is said that Lambert and Cromwell never afterwards spoke to each other as friends. The offence was not forgiven by the Army then or afterwards.

The insecure nature of the Protector's position was shown about this time by another assassination plot. It was more than ever to be wished that the constitution and succession should be settled. King Richard IV. might have succeeded King Oliver as peaceably as Harry, Harry. But there was no precedent for a Protectoral Succession. A King too was less likely than a Protector to be plotted against, and if the monarchy were now restored, either the Cromwell dynasty or the House of Stuart would bring peace to the nation.

Sexby, once an Anabaptist, and formerly an agitator, who has been mentioned above in the business of the Levellers, had been in correspondence with the Spanish Government for an invasion of England, from the Low Counties, in the interest of the Stuarts. His plan was to raise a rebellion in Kent, which Charles was to second with troops imported from Bruges. He failed; but escaped, leaving as his successor a former comrade, Miles Sindercombe, also an old plotter, with £1600 to make experiments in assassination. Sindercombe hired a house at Hammersmith, which opened on "a narrow dirty place or passage, where coaches used to go but softly," and which was part of the road on which Cromwell constantly travelled

between Whitehall and Hampton Court "to take the air." Here an infernal machine was preparing which "would have torn away coach and person in it that should pass by." Besides this, the conspirators laid a train of gunpowder, and a basket full of "most active flaming stuff" in the chapel at Whitehall. The whole plot was revealed. Sindercombe was taken and condemned to death. He contrived to poison himself the night before he was to have been hanged, professing himself a member of the sect called "Soul-sleepers," who believed the soul to share the fate of the body.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

### Kingship.

THE occasion of Sindercombe's plot gave courage to those Members of Parliament who wished to make Cromwell King. They were, as it afterwards appeared, a strong majority in the diminished House. The lawyers, the men of business, and generally the Presbyterian interest, who had been treated with much deference by Cromwell since the establishment of the Protectorate, wished for it. The opponents of royalty were the Commonwealth's men, the principal Officers, and the Fifth Monarchy men and extreme Anabaptists.

The question of royalty had been raised in the House some time before by one Colonel Jephson, but treated with indignation. "Would you go about to make the Protector the greatest liar and hypocrite that the world has seen?" said one Member. Another said he supposed that Charles Stuart was the only "king" who had any right to reign, and he hoped there was no one in that House who would wish to bring him in.

So the question dropped; but Cromwell, in his

significant manner, whilst reproving Jephson for it, and calling him "a mad fellow," took an early opportunity of giving him a regiment, and not long after appointed him to a post on the Swedish embassy.

Cromwell's plan of not interfering with the debates in Parliament gave him the advantage of allowing questions to be started without being responsible for them. Sir Christopher Pack, an alderman of London, who had received knighthood at Cromwell's hands, proposed that an address be presented to the Protector, desiring him to assume the title and office of King of England (23rd February). The first mention of this caused one of those violent outbursts of feeling to which an English House of Commons has always been liable. The proposer of the motion was violently borne to the Bar of the House, to answer for his unparliamentary action. But the lawyers and others of Oliver's party interposed; the "heat" was "soon over;" and the House, passing from one extreme to another, voted by a large majority to address the Protector. An address was drawn up, in which the Protector was invited to assume the government of the three kingdoms with the style and title of King of England, according to the laws of the country. The ancient constitution of the realm was to be thus restored, and the nation and Parliament brought again to the enjoyment of their old rights instead of the paper constitution of the last few years.

The petition went on to limit the Royal prerogative much as the Instrument of Government had limited the Protectoral power. It was provided that Parliaments should be triennial, and enjoy their ancient privilege; that there should be an "Other House," not as yet dignified by the name of "House of Lords," but intended to fill exactly that place in the constitution. The existing religious establishment was to be maintained; but the fullest toleration granted to Dissenters, such a toleration as had been desired by Cromwell from the first day he took up arms. The Council of State of the Commonwealth was to give place to the old Privy Council, which was so to be modified as to exercise something of a co-ordinate authority with the King.

The "Humble Petition and Advice" so drawn was presented to the Protector, to be accepted or rejected by him without amendment, as was the constitutional course with a Parliamentary Bill.

Cromwell's conduct, always hard to be spelled, was in this matter more dark and intricate than usual; and we shall be able to form the best conclusion as to his motives by tracing briefly the history of the long consultations which followed upon the Petition and Advice.

It was pretty well understood that Cromwell was not unwilling to assume the Crown. When, however, he was actually invited by Parliament to do so, the anger of the Army broke out into strong action. A hundred Officers, headed by

Lambert and Fleetwood, waited on the Protector, and begged him to put a stop to what was going on in Parliament. His answer to them is one of the most instructive of the many speeches which encumber, as much as they throw light on, the question of the Monarchy. He spoke with dignity and even severity; said that there was a time when the title of King would not have "frighted them, for they had offered it to him themselves when he became Protector; for himself he valued it not, it was but a feather in a man's cap."

The Army had made him their puppet. It was the Army which caused him to dissolve the Long Parliament and to call a Convention, which had struck at liberty and property, and had to be dissolved. A Parliament was called, which sat five months, and had to be dissolved. Then, again by the advice of the Army, Major-Generals were set up. They might have gone on; but they would have another Parliament. The elections had gone against them. They had angered the country, and not carried their point. It was time to come to a settlement, and have done with arbitrary ways. Some check, some counterpoise, was needed to prevent the judicial power of the Commons becoming a danger to the lives and liberties of Englishmen.

Cromwell never spoke to his old soldiers without effect. Some of the hundred who heard him now were so far convinced as to offer no opposition to the proposition which was being discussed in Parliament. Others, however, held to their opinion,

and would not give up the attempt to upset the project.

The Parliament appointed committees, who came again and again to Whitehall to consult with the Protector, and persuade him that his assumption of the Royal style was the surest way of settlement, the thing which all alike desired. They argued that it was desirable to settle the government of the country, and provide for religious and civil liberty in such a manner that it would not be liable to be upset by the death of the present Protector. The title of Protector was not known to the law; that of King was founded upon the "old and known laws" of the nation. The Royal title was not a mere title; "the whole body of the law was carried on this wheel." The limits of the Protector's government were uncertain, in so far as they were not defined by the Instrument of Government. The King's prerogative was under the Courts of Justice, and bounded "as well as any acre of land." The people wished it, and the Protector ought not to refuse to grant their wish. The name need be no obstacle when they saw the monarchy in actual existence. There was, moreover, a historical objection to the title of Protector, which had only been borne by persons in trust for another, as tutor or guardian. Moreover, many were held from allegiance by a fear of possible penalties in the event of a restoration of Charles II. These would be gained by the title of King under the Act of Henry VII., which made it no trea-

son to obey a *de facto* king, the law not providing for any particular family or person. The foundation of the Royal power was prescriptive, which a new title would destroy. The maxim, "The King never dies," showed the power to be official, not personal. The petition was of right, not of grace. They had been for some time making "probationaries" of new governments, and the existing government might be pulled down by the same power which had set it up. A king was bound to govern by the laws of England, *ratione nominis*, but for any other name, "there was no obligation laid upon it." Custom was as good as statute law; and King and custom were two twins born together—not so Protector and custom. As for the dissatisfaction of good men, they would acquiesce in a thing once done, as David in the death of his child, and would see that God's blessing would still be on the good old Cause if the intended change, or rather restitution, were made. New titles had proved fatal to the liberties of Rome. *Voluntas Cæsaris pro lege habebatur*. They had an example in a happy revolution in the North, where a private gentleman of a noble family (Gustavus Vasa) having saved his countrymen from a tyrant, was called, first, Marshal, and then, by election of Parliament, King.

The speeches which Cromwell advanced to meet these arguments to the deputation of officers, the committee appointed by the Commons to wait on him, and the Commons themselves, run to a

great length; and being ill-reported, and not read in connection with their context, seem to be more obscure than they are in themselves, or were to those who heard them. The prevailing idea of the extreme obscurity of Cromwell's speeches comes from the easy verdict of Hume, who read the undigested speeches as he found them in the pamphlets, and took no trouble to clear the sense. Since Hume, one writer after another has repeated his words, till Carlyle rescued Cromwell from his reporters, and made him once more speak sense. The speeches, like the arguments which they were intended to answer, were delivered at different times and in different circumstances; but as Cromwell's thought appears clearly throughout, we have deemed it better to combine them in one.

He began the conferences by saying that he would leave *self* out of the question altogether, and would speak without "dishonesty or indirectness." For the present he "was not able for such a trust and charge." This expression is remarkable. Cromwell took the negative side throughout the conference. Any willingness that he may have entertained is but sparsely shown, and he may fairly be said to have carried out his profession of leaving *self* out of the argument. He laid stress on three things (arranging his subject, as was his way, with something of an orderly plan, but many digressions and overlappings); necessity, settlement, expediency.

As for necessity, the word "King" was a name implying supreme authority. "If," said the Protector, "you have that, the name is not of necessity." Perhaps, after all, the nation had not made up its mind that the title of Protector was insufficient to maintain the laws. He did not think so himself. The laws had been administered with more respect from the people under the Commonwealth and the Protectorate, and with less interference from the superior authority, than in twice the time in the "halcyon days" of Elizabeth and James I. It was, then, not a matter of *necessity*. He then told the story of his own elevation, showing how God had blessed him and his companions in the cause because of their simplicity and rightmindedness; those very men who now were "grieved" by this proposal. It was not right to grieve such friends and lose their help, even if they were unwise, unless there were strong reason for it. The title of King had been "blasted and eradicated" by the Providence of God, as well as the family who bore it. "I would not build Jericho again." If it were objected that he was doing what no King of England ever did in rejecting the advice of Parliament, he would answer that he was in a different position to any that were actually Kings of England. They had all been of a family which claimed the throne by right, and either came to it by birth-right, or accepted at the hands of Parliament that to which they had "some previous pretence of



title or claim." "I," he said, "have not desired, I have no title to the government of these nations but what was taken up in a case of necessity." As he had taken it, so he would now gladly lay it down, if liberty and godliness could be settled in any other way. Some speakers had mentioned a Parliamentary title. That had a sanction too, the sanction of acceptance by the people. What if the Protectorate be as well accepted as the Monarchy? As for his duty, that lay with settlement only. "Settlement" was the general work. He was "hugely taken" with the word "settlement." He then proceeded to review the "chronology" of the years following the battle of Worcester; how the Long Parliament had played fast and loose with Popery and arbitrariness, and had then designed to make their own power in one way or another perpetual. "This did not satisfy a company of poor men, who thought they had ventured their lives, and had some interest to enquire after these things," as having entered into the war "upon principles of honesty, conscience, and religion;" not mere soldiers, but citizens too. Then when the Parliament found that the Army were set against their continuance, they devised that Parliament should succeed Parliament, so that "one Parliament should step into the seat of another just left warm for them." "We should have had fine work then." Arbitrary committees of Parliament would have taken the place of the Courts at Westminster, one set of

men judging to-day, and another set of men to-morrow. The Parliament would assume to itself the authority of King, Lords, and Commons. This arbitrary government would always result "whenever a perpetual legislation is exercised, *where the legislative and executive powers are always the same.*" . . . "This," said we, "is unsettlement; this is confusion." His Protectorate, which followed next, was called arbitrary; but he was "a child in swaddling clouts" under the Instrument of Government, whereas a perpetual Parliament afforded no check upon arbitrary government.

He calls the history of the Little Parliament "a story of his own weakness and folly." "Truly this was the naked truth, that the issue was not answerable to the simplicity and honesty of the design," and was tending to "confusion of all things," and overthrow of all the institutions of England. These things made him "in love with" the Settlement now proposed, and desirous that it should be perfected. He then proceeded to discuss the document article by article, and to suggest alterations in the proposed Constitution.

Ten days of suspense followed, during which the Petition and Advice was altered according to the Protector's suggestions. Though the Protector had spoken so strongly against the title which he was invited to assume, it was almost universally believed that he desired it, and would not refuse it. It was even rumoured that a Royal crown had been made and conveyed into Whitehall. The

Protector's relations were strongly in favour of the change of title. A letter written to Henry Cromwell in Ireland is extant in which the writer says he expects his next will be addressed to the "Duke of York."

The Committee were summoned to attend His Highness on the 1st of May. The Protector had been indisposed for a few days, and had had much business to attend to. He came into the room where they were waiting, and passed through into the garden "to see a Barbary horse" without saying a word. Then, on being reminded, "excused himself slightly," saying that "he thought the House had risen before his message came, and had not empowered any persons to him." He would give an answer another day. The Protector appointed the 8th of May for his answer to be given in full Parliament, in the Painted Chamber at Whitehall, the appointed place for great occasions of State. This was understood as meaning that the title would be accepted. Suddenly a fresh message was sent that the place of audience would be the Banqueting House. There, on the morning of Friday, the 8th of May, the Protector in a short speech accepted the Petition and Advice as seeking "the settling of the nation on a good foot, in relation to civil rights and liberties, which are the rights of the nation," and to liberty of conscience. As for the title of King, though he acknowledged that no private judgment was to lie in the balance with the judgment of a Parliament, yet surely

they would not deny him his own liberty, it being not only a liberty, but a duty, and such a duty as he could not without sinning forbear.

Considering then all the circumstances that accompany human actions, circumstances of time or persons, general or private and particular, "I have truly thought" (he said), "and do still think, that (at the best) if I should do anything on this account to answer your expectation, it would be, at the best, doubtingly; and certainly what is so is not of faith; whatsoever is not of faith, is sin to him that doeth it. . . . This is my answer, that although I think the government doth consist of very excellent parts in all but in that one thing—the title as to me—I should not be an honest man if I should not tell you that I cannot accept of the government nor undertake the trouble or charge of it, which I have a little more experimented than every man—what troubles and difficulties do befall men under such trusts and in such undertakings. I say, I am persuaded to return this answer to you; that I cannot undertake this government with the title of a King. And that is mine answer to this great and weighty business."

It will be observed that in this speech Cromwell lays stress rather upon "circumstance of time and persons" than upon the nature of the proposal in itself. This gives colour to the common belief, which is given as follows by Whitelocke, who was in constant and familiar intercourse with Cromwell,

and knew as much of his mind as was revealed to any. "The Protector was satisfied in his private judgment that it was fit for him to accept this title of King, and matters were prepared in order thereunto. But afterwards, by solicitation of the Commonwealth's-men, and many officers of the Army, he decided to attend some better season and opportunity in the business, and refused at this time." According to Ludlow, Cromwell had resolved to assume the title, and to override the opposition of the Army. "A few days before his final answer, he invited himself to dine with Desborough and Fleetwood, and did his best to convince them that his assumption of the kingship was lawful and expedient; but finding them obstinate, dismissed them with the jesting remark that they were "a couple of scrupulous fellows." The same day Desborough met Pride in St. James's Park, and told him of the conversation. "Get me a petition drawn," said Pride, "and I will stop it." They went at once to Owen, the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, who drew a petition, which, signed by sixty Officers, was presented the next morning.

Whether or not Pride's Army petition was the immediate cause of Cromwell's refusal, it would seem from all accounts that it was the opposition of the Officers and the scrupulous Republicans which decided him to refuse the Royal title for the present. He probably believed that it would come to him in time, and that the scruples of his best

friends, which he was resolved not to offend, would disappear and leave him free to act as he thought best.

The most likely account of the transaction appears to be this. Cromwell felt that his position as Protector was anomalous, and that his government was of a provisional character. From personal and family ambition, perhaps too with something of fatalism, and from a desire to bring about a settlement, he wished to make his *de facto* sovereignty complete and stable by an act which should add the sanction of the people, through Parliament, to the actual military power, and the acceptance at home and abroad which it possessed. He was persuaded that if he could lawfully assume the title of King it would strengthen his hands; but he was strong enough without it, and in some sense valued it but as "a feather in his hat."

So far he was on the side of the petitioners, and if he had been a private Member of Parliament he would have gone with them. But if the arguments in favour of this title were general, the objections to it were personal and conscientious. Cromwell had helped to abolish the Royal title; how could he set it up again in his own person? He may have remembered the example of Zimri, king of Israel. He believed that God had declared against the title, and that the opposition of the godly party was a sign of this. It was by and through them that God had wrought deliverance, and he could not act against their wishes.

There is no reason to suppose that Cromwell feared the opposition of the Army. He was too well used to break down opposition to fear the opposition of his best friends. Once King, the Army would have acknowledged his title, or he would have new-modelled it at his will; for it was not the same Army which had thwarted him ten years before in his "carnal counsels." His compliance with the wish of the Officers was from conscience, not from fear; from a belief that Providence had declared in one way and not in the other. But he was accustomed to wait on Providence, to see what turns of events Providence would accept. He had not forgotten the "witnessings" and "showings" of the Civil War, and believed fully that such witnessings were continued. But, like Balaam, he allowed himself to think that Providence might change its counsel; and this self-deceiving went so far as to make him think that God's designs went hand in hand with his own wishes. There is little doubt that if Cromwell had lived a few years longer he would have taken the title of King of England, and would not have wanted a "necessity" and a "call" to do so.

Cromwell's doubts were not like those of ordinary men. His doubts were balanced resolutions, not hesitations. His conscience doubted, not his reason. His practical sense was always clear. He saw his course before him both with yes and no. There was nothing unmanly either in his wish for the Crown, or in his refusal of it;

and perhaps he was never greater than when he "put the glittering bauble by" because he could not "lose any servant or friend that might help in the work," even "of a froward, unmannerly, or womanish spirit."

If Cromwell was right in believing that the nation required a monarchical government, then it is evident that his own power would have been strengthened by the use and wont of the title of King. The succession of his son was at the best doubtful; but he was more likely to hold peaceful possession as King than as Protector. The feeling of the people was in favour of Monarchy, and the stirrings for a Restoration might have been laid to rest by the establishment of a new dynasty on the ancient throne.

As it was, though he would have gained more by assuming the complete sovereignty, he gained something by the change embodied in the new constitution. He was now acknowledged, "in heraldry as well as in reality," as one of the sovereigns of Europe. He had the right of appointing his successor, and of nominating a second House, who would act as a check on the Commons. His prerogative, which had been undefined under the first Protectorate, was now the ancient prerogative of the Kings of England, limited (as he himself wished it to be) by certain rules drawn from the experience of Charles I.'s tyranny. Above all, liberty of conscience to the full extent of his own wish was secured to the people; and



as he always desired the good of the people, so he cared for liberty of conscience more than for any other form of good.

But the structure of Monarchy was incomplete without the Crown, and we shall not be doing Cromwell injustice if we believe that he held it still in view, as, when he was a boy at Huntingdon School, it had appeared in vision to his moonstruck fancy.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### The New Protectorate.

THE Petition and Advice, altered to suit the new-modelled Protectorate, was solemnly accepted by Cromwell on the 26th of June, in Westminster Hall; and at the same place and time he received his second inauguration. It was a more gorgeous ceremony than that of December, 1653. A purple robe, a sword, a sceptre of gold, a Bible richly gilt, were the symbols of sovereignty. The Coronation chair, with the stone of the Scottish kings, was brought over from Westminster Abbey, and set under a cloth of state. Ambassadors stood to right and left, and great dignitaries of state around. Garter and Norroy proclaimed the Protector's title with sound of trumpets and shouting. But all must have felt that the ancient Majesty of England was not there as long as the name and symbol of Royalty was away. This was neither the simplicity of Cincinnatus, nor the Royal state of Henry VIII. "A Protector's grace wanted not much of a King," but enough to give the laugh to those who were Kings *de jure*, and,

above all, to Charles Stuart. If Cromwell had gained more real advantage by the establishment of the new constitution, he had also lost credit by appearing to grasp at the crown, and miss it.

At the present moment, however, Cromwell's good fortune abroad brought him the news of "one of the fieriest actions ever fought by land or water," the last fight of glorious Blake. "He fought," says the legend on his medal, "at once with ships and castles: he dared the fury of all the elements." He dashed into the jaws of death at Santa Cruz, in Teneriffe, a crescent of stone walls and roaring guns, silenced the fire of the forts, sank the ships of war and the treasure fleet with its precious burden, every sail of them; and then, after eleven hours' fighting, sailed out again. He lived to receive the Protector's thanks and a costly jewel voted by the Parliament some three months later; and then, stricken with dropsy and scurvy, closed his eyes within sight of England, a worthy countryman of Drake and Nelson; and lay in Westminster Abbey till the fury of the Restoration desecrated his noble grave.

Cromwell, like Wellington, knew that England could not "pretend to soldiery," and rival the great military monarchies on land. He did not try to play the part of Gustavus Adolphus, though had he been firm on his throne he might have done so. But he knew the value of a small English army; and sent in the course of this summer 6,000 English troops to help Turenne

against the Spaniards, and win from them Mardyck and Dunkirk, to make up for the loss of Calais a hundred years before. The treaty with France bore date 23rd March, 1657. The troops were landed at Boulogne in May, and reviewed by Lewis XIV. in person. Cardinal Mazarin had other projects in view, and thought to use the English troops as a catspaw to secure his own frontier inland. Some extracts from Cromwell's despatches to his Ambassador, Lockhart, show that he was not to be so beguiled. "I am deeply sensible," he writes, "that the French are very much short with us in ingenuity and performance . . . to talk of giving us garrisons which are inland as caution for future action, to talk of what will be done next campaign, are but parcels of words for children. If they will give us garrisons, let them give us Calais, Dieppe, and Boulogne: which I think they will do as soon as be honest in their words in giving us any one Spanish garrison upon the coast into our hands. . . . Truly, sir, I desire you to take boldness and freedom to yourself in your dealing with the French on these accounts."

Lockhart's "boldness and freedom" were not resented by Cardinal Mazarin. The two armies fought side by side, and the great Turenne had occasion to admire the good conduct of the English troops. His rival, Condé, was wearing the red scarf as a commander on the Spanish side. The Dukes of York and Gloucester were

there too. Brave deeds were done on both sides; forts carried without a breach; the Redcoats shouting for joy when they saw the enemy, "and chasing the whole Spanish army as far as from Westminster Abbey to St. Paul's," falling on in order or "happy go lucky" as it chanced.

The principal action of this campaign took place on the dunes of Dunkirk on the 4th of June, 1658, a year after the first landing of the 6,000 under Reynolds. Lockhart commanded the English, Turenne the French. The Spanish commander, Don Juan of Austria, insisted on engaging in spite of the opposition of Condé, who declared that, with Turenne at its head, a French army could not fail of success. On his side Lockhart assured Turenne that he was at his service. "M. de Turenne should give him his reasons, if he thought good, *after* the battle." "My lord," said Condé to the young Duke of Gloucester, "did you ever see a battle fought?" "No," said the young prince. "Very well; you are now going to see a battle lost."

The fight lasted four hours, the English troops contributing more than their share to the victory. The Spanish army was routed, leaving 4,000 prisoners in the enemy's hands. Two days later the town surrendered to Louis XIV., who lost no time in handing it over to the English.

Splendid compliments passed between the King of France and the Protector, whose son-in-law, Lord Falconbridge, or Fauconberg, was received

bareheaded by that master of etiquette. Counter embassies, with presents and fine speeches, were sent by the French king, whose sudden illness was (so said Mazarin) the only cause which prevented the Cardinal from attending in person "one of the greatest of men."

Other smaller successes followed—the last glories of Cromwell, the third English captain whose armies had added foreign soil to the English realm.

Cromwell's designs in Europe were not confined to the possession of a town on the French frontier. The Protestant princes of the North had secured the empire to the House of Austria, and thus weakened the Protestant cause endangered by the Peace of Westphalia. The Hapsburgs in Spain and Austria were in Cromwell's eyes the grand enemies of Protestantism, and he employed all his energy to raise a league against them to carry out the designs of Henry IV. France, Sweden, and Portugal were to join with the Protestant princes of Germany, and the malecontents in Poland and Transylvania, to weaken the Catholic interest in Europe, and carry out with more vigour and consistency the scheme which Queen Elizabeth had conceived, but had wanted resolution and enterprise to effect.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### *The Other House.*

THE second session of the "New Protectorate Parliament opened on the 20th of January, 1658. The legislative power consisted now, as in ancient days, of a Chief Magistrate and two Houses of Parliament; and to this Constitution the Protector himself, the nominees of the "other House," and the members of the Commons, were alike sworn. By Cromwell's own advice the question of exclusion of Members had been left to the Houses themselves. Such, therefore, of the hundred excluded Members were admitted to sit as submitted to take the oath of allegiance; and thus the House, as it sat down on the 20th of January, was less well affected to the Protector and his government than that assembly which had passed the Petition and Advice. It would perhaps have been good policy if Cromwell had dissolved the Parliament, and trusted to a fresh election; but it would have caused discontent, and cost money. He had no Major-Generals now to manage elections; and it would have been an act of dis-

courtesy, if not of bad faith, to dissolve the Parliament which had raised him to the throne.

But in two points, either his sagacity was at fault, or he was hampered by circumstances which he could not control. His new House of Lords was from the first a failure; and the re-admitted Members, full of resentment as of ability, were from the first opponents of the new Constitution which they had had no hand in passing, and neglected no effort to make their sovereign and his new nobility ridiculous. The other House as yet bore no distinctive title. It was composed in part of Peers, who, however, refused to sit or absented themselves; of army grandees, great officers of state, old Parliament men, city merchants, and country gentlemen, most of them adherents of the Protector; a dignified "Senate" of the modern constitutional type; but not such a House of Peers, representing wealth and station rather than ability and counsel, as Englishmen are accustomed to respect. The difficulty of finding a name for the new Chamber was typical of the real difficulty. To have called it "the House of Lords" would have made it ridiculous as long as real Lords remained excluded, and would have given offence to the Republicans, who had solemnly abolished the Peerage. To have called it the "Upper House" on the analogy of the "Upper Bench," would have been offensive to the Commons, who had declared themselves the sole origin of government. It is probable that if Cromwell had assumed the Royal



title, he would have summoned by writ such of the old Peers as came within the Parliamentary "qualifications," and would take the necessary oaths; and would have created new Peers to make up the required number. For Cromwell, indeed, if he had lived there was no escape from royalty. He had forced the nation to obey him, and they would again, as in former times, give their allegiance to a crowned usurper, but never to a provisional tyrant.

Such as they were, the Protector met his two Houses at Westminster. He was unwell, and could not make a long speech. Fiennes, the Lord Chancellor, then made a long and elaborate oration, the main point of which was to argue how desirable was the institution of a Second Chamber. His speech had too much of apology in it, and foreshadowed the storm which soon burst.

The Court majority of 1657, which had passed the Petition and Advice, had been weakened both by the drafting of its strongest members into the "other House," and by the readmission of nearly a hundred malecontents. The Protector must have known that he could not govern with such a House of Commons; but Parliamentary government, as we understand it, was no part of his policy. His object in continuing the present Parliament was to avoid offence, and to obtain supplies for extraordinary expenses connected with the Army and foreign politics. He trusted to the action of the Lords to check any hostile

movement on the part of the Commons, and to an early dissolution in case of need. The Oath of Allegiance taken by all the members had been framed on the analogy of the ancient oath as an engagement of personal allegiance to the Protector, not extending as in later examples to a recognition of the Constitution; but it might have been expected that the Opposition would not go so far as to try to upset entirely the new Constitution, under which they sat as Members of Parliament. If, however, Cromwell foresaw that they would do this, he foresaw also that he would have a good pretext for dissolution, and that the Republicans would appear as factious opposers and disturbers of "Settlement."

The leaders of the Commons, now that the Court majority were removed, were strong Republicans. In the absence of their proper leaders the Republican party were headed by Haslerig, Scot, Weaver, and Maynard, men of less ability, but sincere and courageous. Haslerig had been nominated as a Lord—Cromwell's old friend, to whom he had written in his need at Dunbar; a passionate, blustering man, full of his own importance, but not unfit to lead a faction. He came down to the House of Commons and loudly proclaimed his wrongs. He had been the first to sign the bold remonstrance against exclusion, and now he claimed his right to sit according to his election as Member for Leicester. There was some demur at first; but he demanded to take the oath, was admitted, and

thenceforward took so prominent a part in opposition that Cromwell called the House "Haslerig's Parliament."

The Republicans would not "build Jericho again" by assenting to the restoration of a House of Lords. They felt the less bound to anything beyond the mere terms of their oath, as the new Constitution had been passed without their advice or consent. But Cromwell's position as sovereign was bound up by his oath with the new Constitution. He was Protector so far as the new Legislative Body consisted of two Houses, and no further. The quarrel was plain, but as usual in an English Parliament, it took a legal and technical shape, and was not fought out on the main issue.

The principle on which the Petition and Advice was framed was to define as little as possible. It was intended that, wherever it was not otherwise expressed, the old law and custom of Prerogative and Privilege should hold. Hence the oath of allegiance and the Protector's oath were identical with the ancient formulas; the privilege of both Houses, and the right of the Lords to exercise judicial power, were not asserted but implied. But in matters where the experience of half a century had shown that the old landmarks were insufficient, definitions and limitations had been laid down. In particular it was thought necessary to define the extent of that judicial power which the House of Lords had by custom as the highest Court of Justice in the kingdom. Between what

was defined and what was intended to be understood the Opposition found it easy to introduce a doubt. They argued that neither Protector nor Parliament could have intended to restore the House of Lords, which had voluntarily renounced life, and had (said Haslerig) been decently buried by the Army—"our army of Saints." Were they now to disinter the corpse? The Article which defined the powers of the other House spoke of nothing but judicial matters. By the Constitution itself, then, the functions of the "other House" were judicial, and not legislative. It was but an offshoot from the Commons; it could not be a co-ordinate power.

On the day on which Haslerig took his seat in the Commons, Cromwell attempted to check the tumult. He met the two Houses at Whitehall, addressed them as "My Lords and Gentlemen of the two Houses of Parliament, (for so I must own you,) in whom, together with myself, is vested the legislative power of these nations"—thus anticipating and stating for himself the whole question at issue—and in earnest and solemn tones warned them of danger pressing on all sides, and threatening not only their well-being, but the being of the State; from without, the danger to Protestants from the House of Austria, now made once more secure of the empire, after the death of Ferdinand III., in one of its branches; and in the other persecuting Protestants in the South of Europe, the Grisons, the Piedmontese, the Switzers—"a prey of

the Spanish power and interest," guided and helped by an able Pope (Alexander VII.) ; Protestantism divided, Sweden set against Denmark, the Dutch caballing with the Danes against England, " preferring profit before godliness," and even conspiring to provide Charles Stuart with "sloops" to transport troops ;—from within, the danger from the "united" Cavalier and Episcopal interest, from sects and sections of sects, some of them leagued with Stuart and Spaniard. These dangers were real and imminent. Did they think it was "a time of sleep, and ease, and rest, to talk of circumstantial things, and quarrel about circumstances?" Too much time had already been spent. Let them have one heart and soul, one mind to maintain the honest and just rights of this nation, not to pretend to them to the destruction of our peace, to the destruction of the nation. "I beseech God touch your hearts and open your ears to this truth ; and that you may be as deaf adders to stop your ears to all dissension !"

There were two things which would preserve the nation. One, the Army, by which peace was maintained ; "a poor unpaid Army, the soldiers going barefoot at this time in this City, this weather." The other, the "Settlement," the newly-established frame of government, the two Houses of Parliament and himself. "It would be their wisdom . . . and their justice to uphold that settlement."

The concluding words of this speech may well be

here quoted. "While I live and am able I shall be ready to stand and fall with you. . . . I have taken my Oath to govern according to the laws that are now made; and I trust I shall fully answer it. And know, I sought not this place. I speak it before God, Angels, and Men: I did not. You sought me for it, you brought me to it; and I took my Oath to be faithful to the Interest of these Nations, to be faithful to the Government. . . . And I trust by the grace of God . . . I shall—I must—see it done according to the Articles of Government; that every just Interest may be preserved, that a godly Ministry may be upheld . . . that all men may be preserved in their just rights, whether civil or spiritual."

The House would listen to no warning. They were constitutionally in the right. The Protector had overridden the laws of England, and the foundation of his power was neither election nor free consent of his subjects. But he was there, and could not be removed; and for the present he was the only bulwark between themselves and Charles II. If Cromwell fell, the English nation would not of their own good will set up the Republic again. Cromwell's power was the only chance for the Cause, whether he had deserved well or ill of the Cause.

The Republican party miscalculated their strength and popularity in thinking that they could go on throwing contempt on the new Peerage, and that the Protector would not venture to

dissolve them. In fact, he allowed them to do as they liked till, on the 4th of February, they had voted to send their answer by their own messengers. Whether any other circumstance incensed him we do not know. Something happened that morning (4th February), we are told, "that put the Protector into a rage and passion near unto madness." He did not wait to put on a dress of ceremony, nor to have his state carriage got ready. He sent the first servant who was at hand to order his coach, clapped on his hat, ordered half a dozen guards to follow him, and, accompanied only by one officer and his nephew, drove to Westminster. There he "drank a glass of beer in the ante-room," summoned the Commons to the Upper House, and addressed them for the last time.

He told them that he was brought into his present capacity by their Petition and Advice. He had not sought it himself. But having undertaken it, certainly he did look that it should be made good to him. For himself, he would have been glad to have lived under his woodside, to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than have undertaken such a burden of government, "a burden too heavy for any creature." He had accepted it on condition that there should be some persons to come between himself and the House of Commons, and it was granted that he should name another House. They would not have it so—everything must be too high or too low; there was not in them

any intention of settlement. There had been designs of setting up a Commonwealth again: designs among the Army to break and divide. They were playing the King of Scots' game, and helping him in his plans of invasion. Petitions had been got up to draw the people of London into a tumulting, nay, a rebellion! The cause of all the evil was, that they had not honestly tried to carry into effect their own Petition and Advice for the Settlement of the Nation, but had rather plotted for a Restoration. "And if," he continued, "this be the end of your sitting, and this be your carriage, I think it high time that an end be put unto your sitting. And I do dissolve this Parliament. And let God be judge between you and me!" To which (we are told) many of the Members answered "Amen."

Though the Protector's action was hasty, it was not capricious or ill-judged. The Anabaptist and Royalist factions were combining, and coming near to a fresh insurrection. Troops were ready to be transported from the Spanish Netherlands; it was expected that the City would rise and put 20,000 men in arms. The temper of the Army was doubtful. Behind all these active elements of disturbance lay the settled resentment of the nation, wearied with nearly twenty years of strife, desiring nothing so much as peace; but already heartily tired of Puritan professions, and beginning to think that personal government under their old line of sovereigns was better than the despotism of



Cromwell and his "Janissaries." A letter written the day after the dissolution of Parliament says that "if their session had continued but two or three days longer all had been in blood, both in city and country, upon Charles Stuart's interest." The danger was not exaggerated; and the best hope of peace lay in the dissolution of the Parliament which would only discuss and cabal, however harsh and sudden it might seem.

On the 6th of February Cromwell summoned a Council of Officers at Whitehall, and put before them the dangers which threatened the country and the cause, in a speech which lasted two hours. He had not lost the secret of command. There were, however, a few malecontents. Two of these were soon after cashiered. Other officers of the Anabaptist way of thinking were also sent about their business. It seemed as if Cromwell was going to remodel the Army, and purge it of Independents and Anabaptists, forgetful of his old principles and pledges, and of the men whose help had placed him where he was.

Whether or not Cromwell, as was generally believed, made the most of the discontents in order to justify strong measures, discontents were manifold, and the disquiet was general. Great numbers of suspected persons were arrested, Harrison amongst the first. It was said that the prisons contained 12,000 persons under arrest for political reasons. Roman Catholics and Royalists were expelled from London. The changes in the

Army caused much talk and anxiety. Lambert was believed to be intriguing for a Restoration. The fidelity of the Army was not assured. At a review held a fortnight after the dissolution a pistol shot was fired at the Protector, and he thought it necessary to inspect the watch at Whitehall in person. He had for some time been in the habit of wearing a "close coat," or coat of mail, under his clothes. Seditious manifestoes were published and seized. Thurloe's secret police were never so busy; and while plots of all kinds were rife, sober-minded men, such as Whitelocke, the Protector's judicious friend, retired as much as possible from public affairs, and only urged moderation.

But Cromwell was not disposed to be moderate. He engaged the City to stand by him, as he had engaged the Army, and to organize its Militia; and having thus secured himself from immediate danger, he proceeded to retaliate on his enemies. Served as he was by spies, it was easy for him to lay his hand on whom he would. He showed at once his generosity and coolness of head by sending a private message to the Duke of Ormond by Lord Broghill to warn him of his danger if he stayed in London. He waited till the plots were ready to burst, and it is probable that the increased rigour of his government hastened their readiness. Risings were to take place in Yorkshire, Sussex, London; the city was to be fired, the Protector seized, and perhaps murdered; the

King was to land on the southern coast. Some delay was caused whilst invaders waited for the insurrection, and insurgents for the invasion. But a serious rising was to be attempted in London on the 15th of May. That morning Sir John Barkstead, Governor of the Tower, rode into the city with five "drakes" and a strong guard of Militia, and arrested nearly a hundred persons, conspirators and apprentices. In the preceding weeks, and during all April, arrests had been made, and the greater number of those persons who formed the association called "The Sealed Knot" were in custody. Cromwell's plan had all along been to deter by a few terrible examples; and terror never had seemed more necessary than now. When the net was full, he chose out a certain number of prisoners for trial. They were all Royalists. He would not lay his hand on his old friends, or on any who had once served the Cause. His clemency and greatness of heart was never more conspicuous than at this moment, when he was putting in motion the ugly machine of a High Court of Justice, legalized by an Act passed in 1656, but not the less distasteful to Englishmen accustomed to see offences tried by the common courts of justice. Whitelocke and others advised him to let the law take its ordinary course, but he would not listen to them. He professed to look upon the conspirators as guilty of an exceptional crime, as disturbers of a settlement which he had hoped would restore peace to the three nations.

Out of fifteen prisoners tried before the Court of Justice only two were condemned, Sir Henry Slingsby, and Dr. Hewitt, an Episcopalian clergyman. Three of the city rioters were also executed. Much sympathy was felt for Slingsby and Hewitt, and the Protector's severity was made the more conspicuous because both the criminals were connected with his family. Lady Slingsby was the sister of Lord Falconbridge's father. Hewitt was said to have privately married, according to the episcopal rite, Lord Falconbridge and Lady Mary Cromwell, and the Lady Elizabeth used to attend his ministrations. Both she and Lady Falconbridge interceded in vain for the condemned men. Lord Falconbridge came back from his splendid embassy only three days before his uncle's execution, and was able to do no more than prevail with his father-in-law to commute the sentence on both from hanging to beheading. His wife went so far as to beg the French Ambassador to ask the interference of the Cardinal, or even the King of France. As in the case of Don Pantaleon Sa, no personal considerations had weight with Cromwell when he had made up his mind on a matter of public policy; and the two criminals suffered the penalty of their crime or their loyalty. There is no reason to believe the stories of estrangement between Cromwell and his favourite daughter, Lady Claypole. She was taken with a painful and fatal illness, and in the ravings of her delirium it is likely enough that

she may have cried out upon the blood shed by her father; but in her last letter she expressed much thankfulness for the preservation of her father, his family, and the whole nation from ruin and blood; and for a fortnight before her death Cromwell was never absent from her bedside, and almost entirely gave up the care of all public business. He had many sorrows at this time. His sisters, Mrs. Desborough and Mrs. Sewster, both died in 1656; his son-in-law, Rich, died on the 16th of February, only three months after his marriage; and soon after the young man's grandfather, Cromwell's old friend, Lord Warwick. But the greatest grief, one which hastened his own death, was the mortal illness of his dearest daughter. "This," says his faithful attendant, Harvey, "took deep impression upon him, who indeed was ever a most indulgent and tender father. A few days after her death he called for his Bible, and desired an honourable and godly person then (with others) present to read unto him that passage in Philip-pians Fourth, 'Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. . . . I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' Which read, said he, to use his own words as near as I can remember them: 'This Scripture did once save my life; when my eldest son died; which went as a dagger to my my heart, indeed it did.' And then repeating the words of the text himself . . . said he, "'Tis true, Paul, you have learnt this and attained to this

measure of grace, but what shall I do? Ah, poor creature, it is a hard lesson for me to take out, I find it so!’ But reading on to the 13th verse, where Paul saith, ‘I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me,’ then Faith began to work, and his heart to find support and comfort; saying thus to himself, ‘He that was Paul’s Christ, is my Christ too:’ and to draw waters out of the well of Salvation, Christ.”

His nerves, which had never failed him in twenty years of toil and danger, now gave way. For some years before his death his strong and masculine handwriting, the mirror of his courageous spirit, had become weak and tremulous; he seldom wrote more than to sign his name. He could not sleep, and made matters worse by sleeping-draughts. He is said to have been much affected by Sexby’s pamphlet, “*Killing no Murder*,” which appeared in 1657. He became restless and uneasy, wore armour constantly, and carried pistols and daggers. He frequently changed his sleeping-room, kept secret passages and means of exit, appointed a special bodyguard, and himself went the rounds, and inspected the posts; lived much alone, and apart from his family; never took the air but in company with his life-guard, riding violently, and changing his route from day to day. It seemed as if he clung to the chances of life as life itself was failing.

There was more work to be done before he was released. Money was wanted to support the war

with Spain, and there was some thought of an accommodation.

He resolved to call a Parliament, for it was thought that the nation would endure anything rather than be taxed without consent of Parliament; and it seemed probable that the Army, as well as the people in general, would look with more favour than before on the project of assuming the Crown, which seemed to be the only safeguard against Royalist intrigues. Some of the leading Republicans were consulted. They pronounced in favour of an elective Protectorate. Cromwell said he would take his own counsel, and not burden his conscience by making himself responsible for the ruin of the honest party and the nation.

It is hardly to be doubted that, with or without the advice of Parliament, he would at the beginning of its session have declared himself King. Everything pointed that way. His own title of "Most serene Highness," those given to the Protectoral family, "Most illustrious Lord," "Most illustrious Lady," the offices and dignities conferred on them, the greater state with which he surrounded himself, were the attributes of a complete royalty, and could only be justified and made consistent by such an intention; and it is probable that a new Parliament would have accepted the assumption of the royal title, and been content to acknowledge a real Peerage.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### Last Illness and Death.

CROMWELL'S illness had begun in the first week of August, with a violent attack of the gout and other disorders; but he was able to come up to London to lay his dear daughter in Henry VII.'s chapel. He was seen in his coach among his guards in Hyde Park; and a few days later, on the 20th of August, George Fox, the Quaker, tells us, "I met him riding into Hampton Court Park; and before I came at him, as he rode in the head of his Lifeguard, I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him; and when I came to him, he looked like a dead man. . . . He bid me come to his house the next day; when I came he was sick, and Harvey, who was one that waited on him, told me the doctors were not willing I should come in to speak with him. So I passed away, and never saw him any more."

On the 24th, at the advice of his physicians, he went back to Whitehall for change of air. On the same day the Duke of Buckingham, who had married Lord Fairfax's daughter, and had been under surveillance ever since, was committed to the Tower. His father-in-law, the



great Lord-General, went himself to Whitehall to remonstrate, but could not prevail upon Cromwell to retract his order. Fairfax "turned abruptly from him in the gallery at Whitehall, cocking his hat, and throwing his cloak under his arm, as he used to do when he was angry." This was the last meeting between the two great soldiers who had been so much to each other but a few years before. His friends were all gone now except Fleetwood. Ireton, Vane, Ludlow, Harrison, Hutchinson, Martin, Bradshaw, Haslerig, even Lambert; all these men whom he trusted, and who had trusted him when he was fighting for the Cause against its enemies, were either dead or turned to bitter enemies, and the noblest of all now turned away from him in fierce anger.

The malady, which began a little before Lady Claypole's death, left him on the 17th for a few days. On the 20th he was so well that it was hoped the worst was over; but the next morning he was attacked with fits of ague, "long and somewhat sharp." The doctors did not think him in danger; but how gloomy the prospect of his death was may be read in the letters of Thurloe and others about him. "It cannot but . . . make us deeply sensible how much our dependence is upon Him in whose hands is the life and breath of this His old servant; and if the Lord take him away from amongst us, how terrible a blow it would be to all the good people of the land. The people of God here pray much for his

recovery . . . and to have his life spared and his health restored by prayer is a great addition to the mercy. . . . His Highness is just now entering into his fit; I beseech the Lord to be favourable to him in it." His friends could not believe that his sickness was mortal. "His Highness," writes his son-in-law, Fleetwood, on the 24th, "hath had very great discoveries of the Lord to him in his sickness, and hath had some assurances of his being restored." Thurloe writes to the same effect a few days later. "Never was there a greater stock of prayers going for any man than is now going for him . . . and God having prepared the heart to pray, I trust He will incline His ear to hear. And that which is some ground of hope is that the Lord, as in some former occasions, hath given to himself a particular assurance, that he shall yet live to serve Him and to carry on the work He hath put into his hands." Prayers were offered up in churches and by companies of ministers "in an adjoining room" at Whitehall. A general meeting of Officers was called to discuss affairs, but debated nothing, "the whole time they spent in prayer." The fits grew more frequent and violent; the fever was a "bastard tertian," with fits succeeding each other on alternate days, but with attacks of less violence in the intervals also. A change took place on Saturday, the 28th, when the fever became a "double tertian," recurring every twelve hours. On Sunday prayers were offered in all the churches

for his recovery. On Monday Thurloe writes to Henry Cromwell: "Truly since Saturday morning he hath scarce been perfectly out of his fits. The doctors are yet hopeful that he may struggle through it, though their hopes are mingled with much fear." That day he had some talk about the succession to the Protectorate, and it was supposed that he nominated his eldest son Richard in case of his own death. The next day (Tuesday, 31st August) Lord Falconbridge writes that he "is now beyond all possibility of recovery."

Nothing further is told of the course of his illness till it ended with his death on the Friday afternoon. But Harvey has preserved many of his words and ejaculations as he lay for seven days wrestling with death. "We could not be more desirous he should abide than he was content and willing to be gone." He spoke of the two Covenants of Grace and of Works. "'They were Two,' he was heard ejaculating; 'Two, but put into One before the Foundation of the World!' And again, 'It is holy and true, it is holy and true, it is holy and true!—Who made it holy and true? The Mediator of the Covenant!' . . . When his Wife and Children stood weeping round him, he said: 'Love not this world. . . . Children, live like Christians:—I leave you the Covenant to feed upon.' And again, 'Lord, Thou knowest if I do desire to live it is to show forth Thy praise and declare Thy works.' Once he was heard saying, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living

God!’ This was spoken three times, says Harvey. . . . Thrice over he said this; looking into the Eternal Kingdoms: ‘A fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God!’ . . . But again: ‘. . . The Lord hath filled me with as much assurance of His pardon and His love as my soul can hold. . . .’”\*

Monday, the 30th of August, was memorable for a violent storm of wind, which overturned whole forests, swept all traffic from the roads, and threw up with the tide at Deptford, to the dismay of the superstitious, the carcass of a monstrous whale. In the midst of the roaring tempest Oliver was heard praying: “Lord,” he said, “although I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in covenant with Thee through grace, and I may, I will, come to Thee for Thy people. Thou hast made me (though very unworthy) a mean instrument to do them some good and Thee service. . . . Lord, however Thou dost dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart, and mutual love; and go on to deliver them . . . and make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too much upon Thy instruments to depend more upon Thyself. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy people too. And pardon the folly of this short prayer:—even for Jesus Christ’s sake. And give us a good night, if it be Thy pleasure.”

\* Carlyle, v. 166, 167.

On Thursday night, the 2nd of September, "the very night before the Lord took him to his everlasting rest, he said, 'Truly God is good; indeed He is—He will not'—there his speech failed him. . . . Again he said, 'I would be willing to live to be further serviceable to God and His people; but my work is done, yet God will be with His people.' He was very restless most part of the night, speaking often to himself. And there being something to drink offered to him, he was desired to take the same and endeavour to sleep; unto which he answered, 'It is not my design to drink or to sleep, but my design is to make what haste I can to be gone.' Afterwards, towards morning, using divers holy expressions, implying much inward consolation and peace; among the rest he spake some exceeding self-debasing words, annihilating and judging himself." The next morning, the 3rd of September, his fortunate day, the day of "Dunbar field" and "Worcester's laureate wreath," he became speechless, and passed into an unconscious state, from which he did not revive. Between three and four in the afternoon he was heard to give a deep sigh. His attendants went to the bedside, and found him lying dead.

There was rejoicing at Oliver's death; but there was also deep grief and amazement. Thurloe wrote the next day to Henry Cromwell, "I am not able to speak or write: this stroke is so sore, the providence of God in it so stupendous. . . . I can do nothing but put my mouth in the dust,

and say, It is the Lord. . . . He lived desired, and died lamented; everybody bemoaning themselves, and saying, 'A great man is fallen in Israel!'" And Lord Falconbridge: "The consternation and astonishment of people is unexpressible: their hearts seemed as sunk within them. . . . Your Lordship may imagine what it was in her Highness and other near relations. My poor wife, I know not what in the earth to do with her: when seemingly quieted, she bursts out again into passion that tears her very heart in pieces; nor can I blame her, considering what she has lost."

The corpse was embalmed, and buried in Westminster Abbey amongst the Kings of England, with the same splendid ceremonial as had been used in the funeral of James I. "The hearse was magnificent (says Cowley), the idol crowned and (not to mention all other ceremonials which are practised at Royal interments, and therefore by no means could be omitted here) the vast multitude of spectators made up, as it uses to do, no small part of the spectacle itself."

Of those spectators many were true mourners; but more were saddened by a sense that the good Cause had died with its greatest champion, and by the apprehension of the evil days which were coming upon the nation. Oliver Cromwell's work had ended with his life. He had known how to destroy and maintain, but not to build; and the power which he had so mightily wielded crumbled into dust in the hands of his unworthy successor.

Cromwell's personal character is not to be easily summed up. But if there is a harmony in his life which will explain its discordant elements, and reconcile hero and hypocrite, it is to be found in the belief that he had been raised up from among the people to accomplish a work for God, who had prospered it in his hands, and borne witness to it: and that to God, not to men, he was responsible both for his ends, which he knew were great, and his means, which were not those of common men. From this belief came to Cromwell, as to Mahomet and Savonarola, the temptation to believe himself inspired, so that his own will was God's will; a temptation which has its place in great minds. In this he juggled with himself as he did with others: and if he did not "make necessities," he accepted them too readily.

His place in history is among the greatest of practical rulers. As soldier and king he may be ranked by the side of Edward I.; but he had not, like Edward and the Tudor sovereigns, that sympathy with the people whom he ruled which might have made him submit his will to theirs, and be their friend as well as their master. His imperious temper and his impatience of slowness and stupidity made him fitter to rule in war than in peace. In politics patience and forbearance are more powerful than swift decision and heroic courage. Cromwell, like Marlborough, loved difficulties. All was possible to him; but the English people loved the ancient ways, and would not be led to liberty

by a sovereign whom they looked upon as a tyrant. And in the main they were right. "Time is the greatest innovator." But "it were good, that men in their innovations would follow the example of Time itself; which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived. For otherwise, whatsoever is new is unlooked for: and ever it mends some and pairs others; and he that is holpen takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author."\*

Yet Cromwell might have endured this reflection, if he had respected the freedom of his countrymen. Milton's words, written in 1654, might seem prophetic in 1658: "Think often how sacred a trust and from how dear a parent is that freedom which your country has put into your hands, has confided and committed to you. Revere the great opinion which all men entertain, the hope which your country cherishes. . . . Revere the looks and the wounds of those brave soldiers who under your banner have fought for freedom; the most modest, the bravest, the most incorrupt of men; worthy to be the first partners of your councils; Fleetwood, Lambert, Desborough, Whalley, Overton; . . . Lastly, revere yourself; and after having endured so many sorrows and encountered so many perils for the sake of freedom, do not suffer it either to be violated by yourself or impaired by others. You cannot be free unless we are free

\* Bacon, *Essays*, xxiv.



too. Nature has ordained that he who attacks the liberty of others, is the first to lose his own and become a slave. And justly so. But if he who has hitherto been the patron and tutelary genius of freedom, if he who is exceeded by none in justice, in piety, and in goodness, if he (I say) should hereafter invade that freedom which he defended, he must of necessity bring destruction, not only upon himself, but upon the universal cause of piety and virtue. Nay, virtue and honour will appear to have become bankrupt; religion will lose sanctity and respect in the eyes of the generations to come. If this should be so, then would indeed a deadly blow be struck, such as has never fallen upon mankind since that first original wound."

# PEDIGREE OF OLIVER CROMWELL.

Morgan ap Williams = Katherine Cromwell, of Putney,  
(fought for Henry VII. at Bosworth ; settled at Putney) | sister of Thos. Cromwell, Earl of Essex.

Richard Williams = Frances Murfyn, of Ely,  
took the surname of Cromwell |

Henry Cromwell, Kt. =  
of Hinchbrook |

Oliver Cromwell, Kt. | Robert Cromwell = Elizabeth, da. of | Other issue.  
| William Steward, of Ely.

Joan. Elizabeth. Henry. Catherine. | Oliver Cromwell = Elizabeth, da. of | Other issue  
| | | | Sir James Bourchier,  
| | | | of Felsted, Essex.  
| | | | April 25, 1599+Sept. 3, 1658

Robert, Oliver, Bridget, Richard, Henry, Elizabeth,  
b. 1621 b. 1623 b. 1624+1681. b. 1628 b. 1629+1658.  
+ 1639. + 1644 (?) m. (1) Henry Ireton, b. 1626+1712. + 1674. m. Henry Claypole.  
(2) Chas. Fleetwood.

James,  
b. 1632  
+ 1632.

Mary,  
b. 1636+1713.

m. Lord Falconbridge.

Frances,

b. 1638+1720.

m. (1) Mr. Rich,

(2) Sir Chas. Russell.

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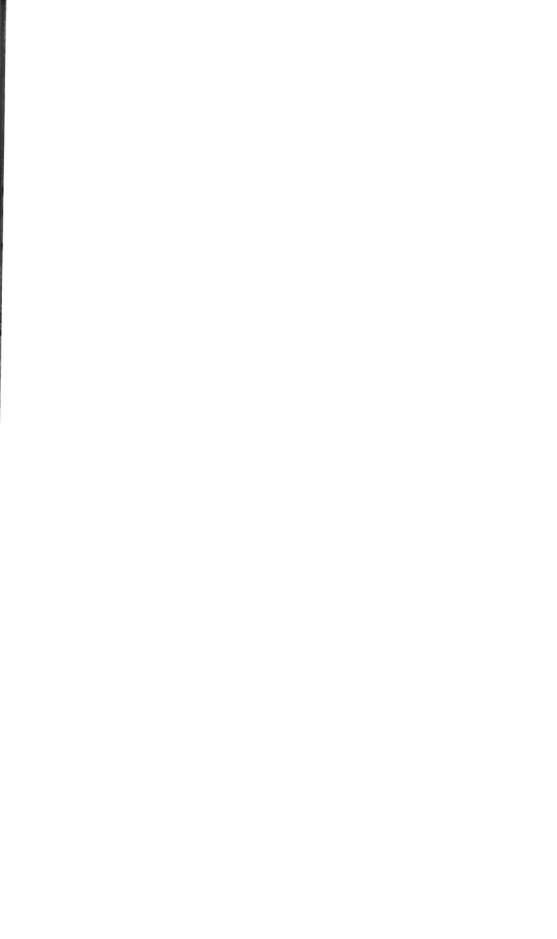
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